TELOS

Number 88 Summer 1991

Populism vs. the New Class
The Second Elizabethtown Telos *Conference*

Goodwyn: Rethinking "Populism"
Lasch: Liberalism and Civic Virtue
Luke: Community and Ecology
D'Amico: Myth of the Totally Administered Society
Fraser: Populism and Republican Jurisprudence
Piccone and Ulmen: Democracy and Federalism

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Rabinbach: Techno-Cosmopolitanism

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A Quarterly Journal of Critical Thought

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Subscription Rates

One-year Individual . . . $28.00 One-year Institutional $70.00
Two-years Individual . . . $56.00 Two-years Institutional . . .$140.00
(Foreign Subscribers, including Canadians, add 15%)

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Back Issues available: ns. 13, 17-51, 53-56, 58-87 at $8.50 each ($17.00 for institutions). Foreign orders, add 15%. All payments must be in U.S. currency. Out of print issues (ns. 1-12, 14-16, 52) can be obtained in microform or facsimile through University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106, U.S.A.

Telos number 88 corresponds to Vol. 24, No. 2. ***Telos*** is published in the Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter by Telos Press Ltd., 431 E. 12th Street, New York, NY 10009. Second Class postage paid at New York and additional mailing offices.

Telos
431 E. 12th Street
New York, NY 10009 U.S.A.

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ISSN 0090-6514

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Populism vs. the New Class: The Second Elizabethtown Telos *Conference (April 5-7, 1991)*

Telos Staff

From Frankfurt to Elizabethtown

The passing of the first generation of critical theorists in the late 1960s-early 1970s coincided with the closing of that transitional phase of capitalist development in the US which, begun at the turn of the century with the Progressive movement (but fully articulated only with the New Deal, as a response to the Great Depression), had transformed traditional *laissez-faire* capitalism into its modern version. That shift also meant the obsolescence of most of the socio-political strategies originally deployed during the 1930s, institutionalized with wartime mobilization in the early 1940s, and theoretically elaborated by, among others, the Frankfurt School in the various analyses of the culture industry and the totally administered (or one-dimensional) society.

Having already rejected Marxist eschatology with Walter Benjamin's theses on the philosophy of history, Critical Theory interpreted advanced capitalism no longer as the prelude to socialist redemption, but as a technocratic nightmare indefinitely perpetuating its irrational logic: a society besieged by increasing reification but with no automatic guarantees of eventual emancipation. This modified analysis, however, retained all the objectivistic features of the older Marxist account, including its pretenses to reflect social reality not instrumentally, as one-sided mediation rooted historically in contingent social conditions, but in its univocal unfolding. Anything short of that was condemned as part of that eclipse of reason into "subjectivism," irrationalism and

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arbitrariness which Horkheimer saw as the fate of critical thought. Thus pragmatism, Critical Theory's American cousin, was dismissed as a "business philosophy,"[1] and that genuine philosophy which lived on because, as Adorno put it at the beginning of *Negative Dialectics*, it had not been realized, became frozen in the mirror image of the same reified and de-historicized social theory previously indicted as ideology.

Critical Theory had from the start been suspicious of a historicism which, easy to acknowledge *in principle*, was difficult to heed *in practice*. Unless grounded in a broader framework, historicity threatened to paralyze all thought within a parasitic relativism condemned to acknowledge passively and thereby legitimate the facticity of the given.[2] Aware of these methodological quandaries, Critical Theory appealed to objective reason to translate an exhausted philosophical tradition into social theory. As *objectified social theory*, however, Critical Theory could not avoid the trap historicism had warned against, i.e., absolutizing the contingent. What it really needed — a phenomenological framework to facilitate these subsequent reconstitutions — it had unjustifiably rejected earlier as terminally tainted by Nazism.[3] Thus, by the late 1960s, it found itself in the unexceptional position of having outlasted its epoch and constitutionally unable to reconstitute its fundamental categories. It could no longer deal with the new social phenomena unintentionally generated by those social dynamics it had sought to grasp.

This methodogenic obsolescence of Critical Theory could only be overcome by dehistoricizing its fundamental categories with the reintroduction of an atemporal apodictic grounding (Habermas and communication theory) or by phenomenologically recasting them to generate a qualitatively different redescription of social dynamics. In both cases, the classical formulation of the theory would have had to be drastically changed. The first Elizabethtown *Telos* Conference sought to clarify the social and political consequences that ensued once the second generation of critical theorists chose the ahistorical neo-Kantian path and

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1. Cf. Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947). Horkheimer's lack of familiarity with pragmatism was even worse than with American society which he confused with the flat depictions provided by Hollywood. Thus he was surprised that Charles S. Peirce could trace his philosophy back to Kant!
2. This is why Marcuse's first book was on this subject. See *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*, trans. by Seyla Benhabib (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).
3. Cf. Paul Piccone, "Does Critical Theory Need Saints or Foundations?," in *Telos* 87 (Spring 1991), pp. 146-57.
4. Cf. "Does Critical Theory Have a Future? The Elizabethtown *Telos* Conference (February 23-24, 1990)," in *Telos* 82 (Winter 1989-90), pp. 111-30.

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confronted what it self-servingly criticized as the "aporias" of classical Critical Theory. By promising to nail all future critical thought to the cross of communication theory as a kind of theoretical expiation for the Marxist sins of its predecessors, the second generation did secure the academic absolution it saw as the only remaining path to salvation — but only after all critique had been prudently limited to the liberal pieties of an exclusive club of "linguistically-competent" intellectuals seeking an elusive consensus arbitrarily hypostatized to the level of universal validity. What was sacrificed in the process was whatever had been "critical" in Critical Theory.

As the self-consciousness of that same Enlightenment ideology fueling the state capitalist reorganization pursued by the New Deal and its successors, classical Critical Theory dehistoricized contingent social dynamics whose very unfolding eroded their preconditions and thus occluded the system's new internal contradictions. Thus the first generation remained blind to the rationality and motivation crises brewing beneath the veneer of instrumental and formal rationality that began to undermine the stability of the welfare state in the late 1960s — precisely the same crises responsible for the recent collapses of allegedly hyper-rational "really existing" socialist regimes. Unable to avoid the intellectuals' occupational hazard they otherwise indicted in terms of "identity logic" (what within other philosophical traditions had been less obtusely described as "the naturalistic fallacy" [Dewey], mundanity [Husserl], pseudo-concreteness [Whitehead, Kosik], or just "reification" [Marx]), they also missed the extent to which the success of bureaucratic rationalization is contingent on the persistence of that recalcitrant cultural otherness which is routinely branded as pre-rational or irrational and whose harnessing within the "plan" also amounts to its demise as organic negativity and otherness.

With the rejection of the second generation's neo-Kantianization of Critical Theory, the third generation succeeded in exorcising any forced panglossian reconciliation with predominant liberal ideology, but in many respects only ended up extending the first generation's logic of one-dimensionality by focusing almost exclusively on futile efforts to reconstitute administratively that eroded organic negativity without which the bureaucratic apparatus deteriorates into irrationality and counterproductivity. Far from functioning as a kind of *katechon* to the process of systemic bureaucratic involution, this artificially-generated negativity *extended* bureaucratic penetration of everyday life and further eroded residual autonomous individuals and institutions able to provide

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the system-regulating organic negativity. Weary of lingering Marxist delusions to interpret every worker's cough or sneeze as proletarian insurgence, the third generation of critical theorists fell prey to standard intellectualistic prejudices of dismissing as irrational, and therefore irrelevant, any organic opposition which did not readily fit predominant theoretical canons defining what constitutes legitimate social and political otherness. Such stringent intellectualistic requirements amounted to a pre-homogenization of that which can obtain as otherness precisely by resisting smooth subsumption within any existing conceptual schemes. As in the case of the first generation, the third generation unwittingly succumbed to the same identity logic it used as its main critical tool. By implicitly legislating what could pass as legitimate negativity in terms of what the theory projected, it forgot its own injunctions against claims to apprehend *exhaustively* nature, life and society and proceeded to redefine them automatically in terms of their necessarily one-sided conceptual otherness. Thus it ended up missing powerful potential sources of organic negativity which were systematically screened out by the theory.

Although the critique of classical Critical Theory was predicated on regrounding the theory in that phenomenology which had been the repressed philosophical birthplace of the Frankfurt School,[5] predominant Left-liberal historiography was not systematically re-examined in light of new categories of analysis — what any minimal application of

5. Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Pollock *et al*, all came out of the phenomenological tradition and originally studied philosophy with phenomenologists such as Hans Cornelius and Martin Heidegger. Initial efforts to blend Marxism and phenomenology to generate a phenomenologically grounded Critical Theory were shortcircuited, in the case of Marcuse, by an identification of phenomenology *as such* with Heidegger's existential ontology (see Herbert Marcuse, "Contribution to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism" (1928), in *Telos* 4 [Fall 1969], pp. 3-34) and, in the case of Adorno, by a highly selective positivist reading of Husserl's *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas*. Although Marcuse never rejected *in toto* his Heideggerian heritage and in the mid-1960s wrote positive re-evaluations of Husserl's last work, *The Crisis of European Sciences*, the Hegelian and Freudian detours he took in the 1940s and 1950s had led him too far afield to allow a fresh reading of phenomenology to alter his social theory. Adorno, on the other hand, never did understand what phenomenology was about and chose in the 1950s to republish unchanged his sketchy and inconclusive 1950s notes on phenomenology (*Against Epistemology: A Metacritique*, trans. by Willis Domingo [Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983]) long after it had become clear that phenomenology could be read — and should have been read by critical theorists — as radical critique. As a result, the critique of identity logic remains suspended within a philosophically embarrassing negative dialectic which has neither head nor tail, and collapses eventually into a questionable mimetic identification with nature. See Sabina Wilke, "Adorno and Derrida on Husserl," in *Telos* 84 (Summer 1990), pp. 155-76.

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phenomenological methodology would have required. The periodization of capitalist development into three distinct phases predicated respectively on the primacy of economics, politics and culture — theoretically articulated by Marxism during its *laissez-faire* capitalist phase, by classical Critical Theory during the statist phase to oligopolistic capitalism, and then by a plurality of eclectic approaches in its post-1968 cultural phase — did not immediately trigger revisions of the one-sided self-understanding of the earlier phases. While the most crucial socio-political confrontations were no longer seen as labor/capital conflicts or anti-fascist struggles but in terms of the deployment of cultural capital as a new means of oppression (contraposing a particularly privileged social sector using knowledge and expertise to dominate most of the rest of the population), this insight was not immediately deployed to redescribe previous social analyses. Consequently, the most important American philosophical school (pragmatism) and the only genuinely native radical tradition (populism) remained hidden under a cloak of ideas woven in an earlier period and systematically distorted by the predominant biases of precisely that group identified in the post-1968 period as the main agency of social domination: the New Class.

Why Populism?

In order to begin to remedy this failure, the Second Elizabethtown *Telos* Conference was devoted to the theme of "Populism vs. the New Class" and planned as a dialogue between American historians engaged in correcting New Class distortions of American history and *Telos* editors attempting to extend their analyses beyond the limitations inherited with the Critical Theory tradition. This attempt to re-evaluate populism and pragmatism — traditionally shunned because of their alleged terminal irrationalism and opportunism — as bulwarks against growing New Class encroachment meant a definitive break with the standard Left/Right distinction predicated on political differences that either no longer exist or have long since been reversed. The ascendence of neoconservatism as the leading faction of the rag-tag coalition constituting the Republican Party has meant a capitulation of the American Right to the very same Enlightenment ideology which had been the official Left's position within the Democratic Party. Similarly, the fragmentation of traditional universalist and formally egalitarian Democratic Party politics into opportunistically-defined corporatist interests predicated on ethnicity, race or gender has also meant the capitulation of Left-liberal politics to the same opportunistic and unprincipled neo-corporatism

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previously condemned as ruling-class *Realpolitik*. At any rate, it has never been convincingly demonstrated that populism and pragmatism were *inherently* conservative movements meant to buttress the injustices of the *status quo* or to legitimate privileged ruling interests, and that they could thus be disqualified as the legitimate heirs to that traditional American spirit celebrated in its own self-image in terms of autonomy, freedom and self-responsibility.[6]

The conference was opened by Gary Ulmen with the key question: "Why populism, why now?" As a political phenomenon which peaked at the turn of the century, populism is usually remembered merely as a politically irrelevant historical curiosity. Yet the collapse of communism as *the* New Class regime *par excellence* and the crisis of bureaucratic rationality ravaging every government in the Western world warrants a re-examination of populism. From the viewpoint of an approach which no longer overprivileges economics but, rather, emphasizes the primacy of politics and, more recently, culture, the failure of communism is not merely the failure of a particularly inefficient economic system, as various New Class analyses present it, but of New Class domination after the dialectic of enlightenment unfolds to the point that enlightenment reverses into myth and instrumental rationality reverses into substantial irrationality. Understood as grassroots resistance to encroachment by state and capitalist agencies on the basis of local traditions, customs and ethical norms, populism becomes a useful concept to configure current as well as incipient developments both in the formerly communist East as well as in the West.

In the USSR, notwithstanding its destructive hyper-nationalist ethnic

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6. Unexpectedly, the very form of the conference reflected its content since the sponsors, Elizabethtown College, the Institute for Business and Society, the National Humanities Institute and the Young American Federation cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered "politically correct" Left organizations. It does document, however, a parallel growing realization on the part of some organizations previously associated with the Right that the old Right/Left distinction is no longer meaningful and a redrawing of political lines is overdue. As such, finding compatibility with a number of positions advocated in *Telos*, much to their credit these organizations considered it worthwhile to set aside standard prejudices and engage in a fresh consideration of contemporary political issues. Indicative also is the response from some sectors of the dogmatic Left, which immediately interpreted such an event as *prima facie* evidence of a Right-wing involution in *Telos* and accordingly condemned the journal as guilty by association and, worse yet, capitulating to Nazi ideology. See Danny Postel, "Splintered Journal Pokes into its own Contradictions," in *In These Times*, Vol. 15, No. 20, pp. 18-19. For a clarification of these issues, see Russell Berman: "The Power of the Press: Danny Gets the Goods," and Maxy Beml, "Stalinism in These Times," both in *Telos* 87 (Spring 1991), pp. 158-67.

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and religious manifestations, widespread populist resentment has clearly been directed against that New Class of party bureaucrats and technocrats who, in the name of the higher socio-economic rationality of socialism, have instrumentalized the state to introduce new and more effective modes of social domination than those obtaining under capitalism. In the West, New Class ideologues have routinely condemned this socialist instrumentalization, but only because it lacked "democratic" legitimacy. Thus they feel free to champion roughly the same socio-political projects at home where there are allegedly no such legitimation deficits. By opposing a mythically virtuous "civil society" to the evil state, they seek to rationalize the latter by strengthening the former. But the contraposition is fraudulent, since "civil society" turns out to be a reified political arena dominated almost exclusively by "linguistically-competent" New Class agents. These would-be state bureaucrats have a vested interest in existing modes of domination articulated through exclusionary mechanisms of a highly sophisticated media-driven "representative" democracy. As with the "economic" democracy of the former Soviet bloc, the New Class' "representative" democracy is also flawed and excludes the overwhelming majority of a manipulated population. Only a genuine democratic system — one based on popular participation and political self-education — can ultimately resolve the present crises of rationality and motivation by re-engaging in social, economic and political life that precategorical dimension of being whose exclusion ultimately drives the dialectic of enlightenment to its self-destructive conclusions. What has led to the recent demise of communist people's democracies is but an extremely exaggerated manifestation of similar problems in Western "representative" democracies. These crises can ultimately be resolved only by engaging in public life the whole individual rather than only a splintered economic or public *persona*. This is precisely what populism promises by vindicating concrete individuality rooted in communities, traditions, customs etc.[7]

7. This concern is also behind liberal and neoconservative emphases on "the market" as a solution to all the problems of what were "really existing" socialist economies. As a concrete individual engaged both at the conceptual and the preconceptual levels, the capitalist can presumably make decisions substantially more rational than any bureaucratic apparatus limited to the formal or conceptual dimension. Unfortunately, within capitalism as it has been historically organized, only a very limited number of people participate in this decision-making process in which the whole personality may be immersed. Therefore, market rationality is equally limited — which explains why advanced capitalism tends to exhibit, at a reduced but increasing rate, all the problems of socialist economies. Thus the decentralization and re-federalization precipitated by the communist collapse is also the solution for Western capitalism —

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According to Ulmen, it is not just the collapse of the Soviet empire and the recent resurgence of various populist movements in Eastern Europe that call for a re-examination of populism, but also developments within the US and issues such as participatory democracy, federalism, ecology and communitarianism, which have become stalemated within the antinomies of standard academic disciplines. Thus he defined the task of the conference as an exploration into the possibility of such a project. Unlike in the past, when populism was often associated with anti-intellectualism and, at any rate, was never articulated at the level of social and political theory, today it can be approached from the perspective of rich intellectual traditions such as Critical Theory and pragmatism.

Populism and Ecology

Historically, populism has not emerged spontaneously during relatively "normal" times but has always developed as a response to concrete threats to existing communities, life-styles or other established relations. It made sense, therefore, to begin discussing it in terms of existing crises and the various responses to them. Thus, the first session began with a paper by Tim Luke on "Community and Ecology." Preliminarily dismissing the social sciences' one-sided New Class readings of populism as a pre-modern throwback or as various forms of irrationalism, Luke began by reiterating Critical Theory's standard criticism of the technocratic view of nature as an alien entity to be manipulated at will, i.e., as the source of the ecological crisis. Standard New Class solutions to this crisis were readily dismissed as counterproductive. He argued that the various fashionable versions of "environmentalism" only perpetuate New Class domination by attempting to bureaucratically regulate an otherwise unchanged technocratic system — the real culprit. Instead of resulting in a changed relation to nature

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and has already been prescribed with so far relatively weak and indecisive efforts at "privatization," "sub-contracting," "departmentalization," "post-Fordism," etc. Similarly, political reforms presently being deployed against the former Soviet state will have to be complemented by isomorphic economic reforms of what is being celebrated as "market economics" before any substantial improvement can take place. Thus today, along with seemingly insurmountable problems, the USSR also confronts an historical opportunity comparable only to that enjoyed by Germany and Japan after WWII when they rebuilt their industries and socio-economic system in terms of the most advanced technology and social organization known at that time. The inevitable socio-economic reconstruction can take place not by merely adopting "really existing" capitalism but what capitalism is about to become: a lean-and-mean post-Fordist, decentralized system free of the handicaps of the flaccid bureaucratic capitalism in the US.

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as humanity's inorganic body, this strategy only multiplies bureaucratic structures, renders life increasingly unmanageable, and ultimately fails to address the real threat of environmental collapse. To counter this view of nature and its results, Luke proposed an "eco-populism" predicated on the premise that only "communities [can] reconnect their economies and societies with the immediate supporting eco-region," but only if presently disintegrated communities are simultaneously strengthened to the point that they can re-internalize an organic relation with the surrounding environment. He characterized these "thicker types of communities" required by eco-populism in terms of small-scale economic proprietorship within "flexible regional networks" and "local political associations" with an active local citizenry "linked by common ecological, economic and ethical interests."

In order to function as self-regulating, ecologically-viable mechanisms, these communities require real federal structures promoting "self-rule, self-ownership and self-management" and, *ipso facto*, decreased bureaucratic control and corporate penetration into everyday life. Local autonomy is possible only in relation to other neighboring communities operating within a federal framework held together by a strong but limited constitution. These "new communal associations" may help generate a "new subjectivity" predicated on "demanding moral codes advocating frugality, ecological responsibility, hard work or humility" — something without which it may be impossible to sustain "thick communities." As for the threat of regression into obscurantism — a concern often voiced by New Class critics — the global nature of capitalism may well buffer its own destructive impact. Modern communication and transportation systems inevitably link communities, encourage interaction, comparison of life-styles, ways of adapting to change, etc., thus counteracting possible reactionary tendencies historically associated with earlier brands of populism.

Conservative Critiques of Populism

Clearly, Luke's descriptions of eco-populism did not correspond to any existing movements or communities, but expressed projections of *possible* developments within the ecological movement. This was not missed by his commentator, Samuel Francis, who immediately voiced serious reservations concerning whether environmental degradation is a viable catalyst for a new populism. Well aware of the swift and successful co-optation of growing populist sentiment within the New Right by neoconservatives, he emphasized that movements triggered by outside

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bureaucratic provocations are particularly vulnerable to New Class cooptation because the attention span of would-be populists is always limited by other, more pressing, needs. Discontent must also be organized to be effective — at least in the long run. Today there are no signs that anything resembling populism is even close to being institutionalized into a viable political organization and, if they do eventuate in effective political organizations, these will inevitably fall victim to Michel's "iron law of oligarchy." Consequently, Francis concluded, any populist discontent is likely to be readily instrumentalized by New Class interests.

Luke acknowledged this predicament, but emphasized that, if the general perception that there is in the US a widespread grass-roots disenchantment with both major political parties is correct, then it will probably be only a matter of time before some charismatic figure or organization will be able to solidify this discontent into a substantial political movement with concrete institutional roots not necessarily reducible to the old party politics. Developments of this type are already taking place in, e.g., Northern Italy, where the new "leagues" are beginning to create different political forms.

Francis' insistence on *Realpolitik* was an effective inhibitor to Luke's more speculative formulations and, notwithstanding substantial areas of agreement, pointed out a fundamental difference between third generation critical theorists and traditional conservatives in their respective approaches to politics. Whereas Luke's starting point was the deployment of standard ideology critique to identify that dimension of Being unavoidably excluded from particular conceptual articulations (which thereby resurfaces as negativity and, as such, provides the bases for alternatives and correctives to the *status quo*), Francis' focus remained throughout on objective political realities. As a result, the discussion tended to be more concrete and acted as a restraint on overly optimistic projections of a possible populist upsurge in the immediate future. Similarly, it was quite obvious that this stress on *Realpolitik* exacted a stiff price in the traditional conservative critique of liberalism. The enthymematic injunction to stick to the given seemed to stymie the imagination into accepting far too many of the opponents' assumptions and to checkmate the prefiguration of substantial alternative possibilities, thus plunging the analysis into a terminal pessimism. All this became crystal-clear with the next paper, by Claes G. Ryn on "The Problematic Heritage of Populism."

Given the traditional conservatives' concern with the established order

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and natural hierarchies, it is not surprising that Ryn was not particularly sympathetic to any resurgence of what he understood as "populism" — something he proceeded to associate with the worst "plebiscitarian" features of the French Revolution: Rousseauism and Jacobinism.[8] Unlike the critical theorists' attempts to re-think a traditional populism which, for all practical purposes, they deem historically defunct, Ryn identified the populist heritage as alive and well in today's liberal democracy. Worse yet, he saw it as the precondition for New Class ideology as advocated by, e.g., Alan Bloom and the neoconservatives, whose imperialist agenda is, on the international level, the imposition of a liberal managerial ideology hidden within the Trojan horse of "American democracy" and "human rights" and, on the domestic level, the homogenization of American particularity, specificity and diversity.[9] Contrary to the traditional Left's dogmatic assumption of the Right's uncritical support of capitalism, Ryn indicted it along with "plebiscitary democracy" for bringing about social disintegration and contemporary nihilism: "The destruction brought by capitalism . . . is similar to the one effected by plebiscitary democracy. In the end, the old decentralized and group-oriented society and the ethical, intellectual and cultural beliefs that fostered it are left in ruin."

Although derived from Edmund Burke, Ryn's critique of capitalism and "plebiscitary" democracy as agencies of homogenization and New Class domination came surprisingly close to classical Critical Theory's analyses of American society in the 1940s and 1950s. According to Ryn, "capitalism can do much to obliterate traditional ethical and cultural standards and uproot traditional communities. For some of today's proponents of capitalism one of its appeals may be precisely that it can accomplish a task of destruction." Ryn and Critical Theory, however, begin to differ with the latter's rejection of all hypostatizations of fixed "natural orders" and the dismissal as "romantic reaction" of proposals to reify idealized traditional communities rooted in a particular time and

8. A version of this paper has been published under the title "Saving the West: The New Jacobins," in *Humanitas*, Vol. 5. No. 2 (Spring 1991), pp. 1-8. Cf. also Claes G. Ryn, *The New Jacobinism* (Washington: The New Humanities Institute, 1991).

9. This explains why Ryn and his collaborators in the National Humanities Institute opposed the Gulf War and were thereby ostracized within the neoconservative dominated Right coalition, already annoyed to the breaking point with the group's unrelenting critique of the managerial bureaucracy and of the neoconservatives' adoption of standard statist liberal policies. For a confused neoconservative account of this otherwise serious internal split within the conservative camp, see Jacob Weisberg, "Hunter Gatherers," in *The New Republic* (Sept. 2, 1991), pp. 14-16.

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place as universally valid social models. Because hierarchies tend to perpetuate themselves long after their meritocratic bases have been eroded, they cannot be legitimated as "natural orders" independently of demonstrable standards of performance; and traditional communities are far too heterogeneous to be reduced to any particular model that can be retained unchanged, impervious to external social dynamics. The most striking differences, however, obtain at the level of democratic theory. Whereas Ryn contraposed a crypto-totalitarian "plebiscitary" to a traditional "constitutional" democracy, efforts to reconsider populism as a viable opposition to New Class domination are predicated on a rather different distinction between a participatory (or direct) democracy and its mass representative counterpart.

Unlike Ryn's concept of plebiscitary democracy, the participatory kind articulated by the new populism is neither opposed to a strong constitutionalism nor supportive of the homogenization and abstract individualism presupposed by standard versions of representative democracy. Rejecting Enlightenment ideology as neither universal nor enlightening, but as merely the particular perspective of a relatively new social formation, the new populism vindicates the particular communities and their cultural sovereignty, i.e., it rejects any transcendental axiological scheme as binding unless independently legitimated by the community itself. This communitarianism is by no means opposed to but actually requires a strong, limited constitutional framework to regulate relations among the various, occasionally radically different communities and guarantee their autonomy. Such a federal structure, however, would be much closer to what obtained in the US *ante bellum* period or in the Swiss Constitution — a document originally modeled after the *ante bellum* US Constitution — than anything reminiscent of contemporary liberal readings of the US Constitution as a statist pseudo-federalist travesty.[10]

At any rate, Ryn's vindication of constitutional democracy as a bulwark against a plebiscitary democracy alleged to engender New Class domination — an effort to forestall further homogenization, community disintegration and erosion of whatever particularity and otherness remain — seemed misplaced. In the effort to protect the system from possible "populist" whims somehow able to master a working majority, Ryn seemed to presuppose an overloaded open-ended constitution which

10. This populist account has little in common with demagogic multicultural schemes predicated on the "federal" state's enforcement of artificially reconstituted identities to guarantee cultural fiefs for otherwise sub-standard "native" intelligentsias.

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is extended to cover every kind of activity down to the most intimate details and, consequently, becomes vulnerable to an opportunistic New Class politicization threatening the system of separation of powers even more than any populist reform. Shielded from communitarian concerns able to prevent its unwarranted extension into everyday life to displace previously internalized traditions and customs, this process of destruction has actually been facilitated by conservative efforts originally meant to prevent it.

Because of his distrust of the "plebe," Ryn's version of "constitutional democracy" is excessively dependent upon a federal constitution unwittingly understood, in uncharacteristically statist terms, as primarily a *substantive* rather than an *organizational* document. If traditions and customs are not seen as *living* practices which function best when internalized as second nature, this precategorical dimension of Being becomes fetishized as objective *products* which, along with all other objectifications, are vulnerable to the standard vagueries of commodification and mundanity. Thus they turn into nuggets of objective wisdom to be safely stored within well-guarded vaults (such as the US Constitution) safe from the temporary whims of whatever majority happens to obtain at any given time. But this is clearly a losing battle since, interpreted as an increasingly broader *substantive* document, the constitution will eventually have to reflect, in some form or other, the changing views of those agents it designates as the ultimate repository of sovereignty. By carefully shielding communitarian concerns from the legislative process, conservatives unwittingly substitute for "the people" as the ultimate authority particularistic interests able to manipulate whatever consensus has to be mediatized for whatever task. This turns the constitution over exclusively to lawyers and lobbyists as mediational entities obtaining not between the constitution and communities, but between the constitution and particularistic economic interests. As an increasingly broader substantive document, the constitution cannot avoid falling prey to legal positivism and ends up legitimating — as it has done since its reconfiguration as a *national* document following the Civil War — statism, bureaucratic domination and the annihilation of all traditions and customs which do not readily fit the state's homogenizing administrative agenda. Thus, notwithstanding his conservative credentials, Ryn's critique of the "New Jacobinism" presupposes the same objectivistic Enlightenment ideology of his alleged liberal opponents and, therefore, provides only what Hegel used to call an "abstract negation." A traditional constitutional doctrine defining the federal

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constitution primarily as a fixed *organizational* document contraposed to and regulating other lower substantive legal institutions — a populist solution — may free the federal constitution of most positive legal matters and help prevent the politicization of Supreme Court decisions. Left as grass-roots institutional prerogatives, traditions and customs can thrive and facilitate that organic popular *Bildung* which a pseudo-federal government cannot legislate other than by forfeiting its pedagogical role to predominant economic interests and by homogenizing all through consumerism. These problems became even more obvious with the next presentation, by Michael F. Federici, one of Ryn's closest associates who, as such, shared his fundamental outlook.

Whereas Ryn's presentation resonated in spirit, if not always in theoretical formulations, with many of the concerns behind the new populism, the same could not be said of Federici, who developed a much more severe critique of the alleged anti-constitutional tendencies of what he understood to be American populism. Following Burke, he explicitly argued what in Ryn's analysis had remained largely implicit, i.e., that a constitution is supposed to embody the accumulated wisdom of preceding generations and to provide the institutional mechanisms to guarantee that such wisdom will bear on policy-making. It is precisely this function, said Federici, which has been subverted by populist desires to yield to the immediate whims of majoritarian views: "What most populists fail to realize is that the momentary majority is something very different from what the Founders called the 'deliberate sense of a community'." Frustrated with what they have interpreted as an elitist ideology antagonistic to the American spirit, populists have traditionally failed to understand that the American federalist tradition is itself based on the communal generation of natural elites embodying virtue, providing leadership and ensuring political wisdom and stability.

Federici acknowledged his unfamiliarity with "the new populism" and, therefore, limited his account to the constitutional reforms proposed by what he considered "Right-wing populists" in the 1940s and 1950s, predicated on what they saw as the "undemocratic" decisions of an activist Supreme Court. Whether or not these complaints were unwarranted, according to Federici they should not have resulted in calls for constitutional reforms since the latter would threaten the system of checks and balances built into the separation of the legislative and judicial branches of government. Such reforms would have compromised the constitutional model indispensable to political order. Thus the populist assumption that the Supreme Court should reflect

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popular will is at least as subversive as what populists opposed, and it was all to the better that these reforms were never implemented.

While Federici's presentation did help to understand some of the reasons for the failure of populism, it was framed within a series of questionable assumptions that tended to confuse rather than clarify the meaning and prospects for a "new populism." Unlike Ryn's elegant articulation of a traditional conservative critique of New Class domination, whose main difference with the new populism concerns primarily his contraposition of a problematic "constitutional" democracy to its "plebiscitary" counterpart, Federici's account betrayed all the flaws of a tired conservatism unwittingly subverted by Enlightenment ideology and, as such, forgetful of its own philosophical underpinnings. Thus his explicit defense of the US Constitution as the embodiment of the accumulated wisdom of the past succumbed to the identity logic of liberalism and neoconservatism to the extent that it presupposed that such wisdom could be effectively objectified in a particular document.

The profound conservative insight that "the accumulated wisdom of the past" can only thrive as traditions and customs, i.e., as *lived* realities internalized as second nature, and that this wisdom cannot therefore be translated entirely into any particular conceptual objectification — even into as carefully crafted a document as the US Constitution — is lost in Federici's implicit acceptance of the New Class dogma that traditions and customs can and should be exhaustively codified as laws and regulations. It unintentionally transforms the constitution, a document unavoidably besieged with unresolved internal contradictions between its organizational and substantive parts, from something primarily meant to regulate fixed formal relations among autonomous units entrusted with legislative prerogatives — something it can do — into the equivalent of a demiurge ultimately responsible for legitimating every policy and activity in an increasingly undifferentiated statist context where all branches of government eventually mesh into a totalizing whole — something it cannot do or, at best, cannot do well. As the "repository of past wisdom," the constitution becomes entirely a substantive document which can deal with life only by reducing it in principle to its conceptual otherness by means of an unavoidably politicized process of selection and reduction.

Such an overloaded document must render explicit what was previously implicit as organically developing norms, traditions and customs. This homogenization and reification of all Being as thought and

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the subsequent redefinition of Being exclusively in terms of what was grasped conceptually as identity logic accelerates what Carl Schmitt called the "motorization" of legislation (which eventually delegitimates legality as such by making contingent the myriad laws constantly fluctuating in the futile effort to regulate all activity and mesh it into a coherent well-administered whole), politicizes every feature of existence in the process, and paves the way for the rise of a "super-legality" as the only way to practice morality within a hyper-politicized context allowing for no pre-political private space, thus ultimately threatening any constitutional order. Far from being the solution, Federici's constitutional doctrine is the problem.

Such a pseudo-conservative doctrine[11] has embroiled conservatives in such hermeneutical conundra as "original intent" or "strict constructionism," which have exhausted their energies for the last few decades. As with the unbridgeable gap between man and God which, according to Hegel, necessitated the Church as a mediational agency, Federici's implicit acceptance of liberal constitutional doctrine posing the constitution primarily as a *substantive* super-document leads him to configure the role of the Supreme Court not as a purely interpretative body leaving substantive adjudication to lower legal bodies, but as an agency entrusted with the mechanical retranslation of that wisdom allegedly objectified in the constitution into particular cases brought to its attention. But if the constitution is understood in this fashion, this retranslation will necessarily involve an extra-legal process of selection and subsumption, and thus politicization, turning the Supreme Court from a juridical into a *de facto* legislative body. Whereas with the constitution as primarily an *organizational* document the Supreme Court justice takes on a formally passive role and all extra-documentary elements inevitably entering into the adjudication process are thereby degraded to

11. For a truly conservative account dealing, however, primarily with German constitutional issues, see Carl Schmitt, *Verfassungslehre* (1928), Second Edition (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1970). The book ends with a sketchy but insightful outline of the relation between federalism and democracy. Although Schmitt was obsessed with the homogeneity of the population as a precondition for nationhood — a paradigmatically German concern — he did perceive the originality of the American and Swiss constitutions as successful solutions to the problem of political organizations comprising heterogeneous populations. He also recognized the ambiguity in the American Constitution between interpretations of the US as a federation of states and as a national entity — an ambiguity which was resolved in favor of the latter interpretation only with the Civil War. Yet, Schmitt never drew the consequences of such a shift, other than by pointing out that, in order to prevent disintegration, it was absolutely essential, from the legal viewpoint to treat all minority members as abstract individuals.

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unavoidable extra-rational disturbances to be kept to a minimum, with the constitution as primarily a *substantive* document, judges must go beyond the law as such in rendering their decisions, i.e., to that domain the law does not and cannot, in principle, cover.[12] This is why lower court judges must be elected by popular vote: to ensure their immersion in predominant community traditions and customs.

Since Federici's interpretation of the constitution as primarily a *substantive* document presupposes the impossible task of translating all subjectively lived traditions and norms into objective legal structures, the Supreme Court ends up stuck with the task of interpreting these objective entities by recourse to lived experiences and practices that could never have been embodied in any document and, therefore, it becomes a *de facto* legislative body by implicitly stipulating the *principia differentiationis* deployed in the selection of pre-legal material. Within such a context, both liberal and conservative calls for either activism (reinterpretation of old structures in light of changed historical conditions — yet in the alleged "original" spirit) or restraint (forcing particular cases to fit what the constitution allegedly literally claims) already presuppose the very disintegration of the separation of functions the constitution is meant to guarantee. Thus it is not an accident that the two most important pieces of legislation in the past half century, dealing respectively with integration and abortion, have actually been Supreme Court decisions, and the most intense political battles in the US today concern the nomination and confirmation of Supreme Court justices. Federici's principled opposition to the old populist call for constitutional reforms not only amounts to a quixotic defense of an order which no longer exists but, worse yet, constitutes an apology for the present pathological constitutional predicament implicitly assumed as "normal."

To be consistent and politically effective, conservatism would have to provide a considerably more radical critique of the legal positivism of liberal jurisprudence and vindicate that traditional dimension without which democracy becomes an empty formality susceptible to the

12. The US Constitution originally tackled this issue in terms of the relation between the federal and the state levels, leaving substantive matters as much as possible to the states. A new populist constitutional doctrine today cannot appeal to traditional states' rights as conservatives and some populists have traditionally done, since the states themselves can no longer be considered *national* entities as in 18th century colonial America. Rather, the federal principle should be extended as much as possible to state constitutions as well, delegating legislative power as much as possible to county and city levels, where participatory democratic practices are more likely to be effective.

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kind of instrumentalizations that have occurred for over a century. After all, democracy is either government *by the people* or it is not democracy. To restrict it to the point that popular input ends up effectively excluded is counterproductive and screens out the only agency that can ultimately defend and articulate the grass-roots community values, traditions and norms Ryn advocates. The democratic wager was that people themselves can best administer their affairs, given an opportunity to do so. The populist insistence on direct democracy within institutional contexts limited in size and guaranteed by strong constitutional structures is not only anathema to New Class domination, but the only way to allow traditional values and customs to develop organically, unencumbered by politically correct "human rights" and other *prima facie*, obviously benevolent bureaucratic mandates whose ultimate impact is state penetration of everyday life, increased dependence on bureaucratic structures, and grass-roots disempowerment.

Towards a Populist Understanding of Populism

The papers presented in the opening session clearly assumed different notions of "populism." For Luke it was a potential form of political organization which could become the ultimate repository of a democratic ethos impossible to articulate satisfactorily within the predominant forms of representative democracy; Ryn interpreted it through a peculiar reading of Rousseau as the intellectual fountainhead of New Class ideology; and Federici presented it as transitory plebeian opportunism willing to risk undermining the whole constitutional framework for immediate particularistic gains. It was, therefore, necessary to devote some time to clarify basic concepts. This is precisely what Lawrence Goodwyn did with his paper on "Rethinking Populism." An American historian who has spent most of his professional life studying populism, Goodwyn was particularly qualified for the task. Yet, contrary to expectations, he chose not to reiterate the results of his historical research, most of which have already been published and have become standard references on the subject. Rather, he provided a theoretical overview of why, over the years, populism has been the subject of so much unwarranted criticism and abuse by using the particular examples he was most familiar with: turn-of-the-century Agrarian Populism in the US, and the more recent Solidarity movement in Poland.

Much to the surprise of the critical theorists present, Goodwyn proceeded to develop a critique of standard analyses of populism in terms of identity logic, by calling for the equivalent of that "micrology" in

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historical research Adorno had proposed as a way to avoid the domination of the concept. Not once, however, did Goodwyn rely on Critical Theory while making a case against New Class intellectuals as compelling as anything ever produced by the Frankfurt School. Simply put, American historians of populism such as Richard Hofstadter[13] and Western experts on Poland such as Timothy Garton Ash, occlude the specificity and concreteness of populist phenomena by subsuming them under universal intellectualistic constructs and by privileging as evidence what other intellectuals happen to write about these events. These views become part of academic conventional wisdom and ultimately subvert the democratic ethos by discrediting as responsible political subjects concrete people (as opposed to "The People," denoting an undifferentiated mass of crude abstract individuals).

Rapidly summarizing the results of his earlier research, Goodwyn pointed out how any careful examination of the American Populists' documents and programs (which Hofstadter apparently never studied) or of Solidarity's actual genesis in the Baltic shipyards (as opposed to what Warsaw intellectuals *thought* had happened) reveals a grass-roots democratic ethos much stronger and well-grounded in the particular movements' experiences than one would ever infer by merely consulting most of the existing literature on the subject. Because of over-reliance on journalistic accounts celebrating the role intellectuals such as Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron played in the genesis of Solidarity — a role Goodwyn has shown in his recent book, *Breaking the Barrier: The Rise of Solidarity in Poland*, to have been considerably less significant than otherwise exaggerated by professional Poland-watchers — most Western readers were surprised by how easily the crude and uneducated Lech Walesa, a populist, could defeat the refined and well-educated Warsaw intellectual Tadeusz Mazowiecki (who could not even draw more votes than a mysterious dark moose that literally came in from the Canadian cold). Moral of the story: do not take New Class wooden nickels about populist politics and its prospects but, instead, pay close attention to concrete evidence, preferably unmediated by other intellectuals with questionable ideological credentials.

13. As an American historian, Goodwyn focused on the leading culprits in his paricular discipline. The indictment, however, is even more applicable to other related disciplines such as political science and sociology where, for example, Seymour Martin Lipset's ravings against "working-class authoritarianism" in his much celebrated *Political Man* have been even more influential than Hofstadter in discrediting and distorting any popular political initiative.

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While what "populism" really means was still in need of considerable elaboration, Goodwyn managed to trace the contours of a potential populist politics. Following this path, Christopher Lasch's paper the next morning on "Populism and the Revolt against Liberalism" further brought the discussion down to concrete political issues. Recapitulating some of the main arguments in his recent book, *The True and Only Heaven*, Lasch criticized Francis Fukuyama's account of the "end of history" as another liberal celebration of the "end of ideology" not all that different from Marcuse's and Adorno's notions of "one-dimensional" or "totally administered society." Fukuyama's vision of a society without contradictions — an unwarranted inference from the fact that liberalism has seemingly triumphed over communism — overlooks the fact that this is not so much a result of liberalism's triumph as of communism's collapse. When all is said and done, liberalism today is "crumbling from within."

Elaborating some of the implications of Luke's earlier account of "eco-populism," Lasch emphasized that the realization of the inability of the earth's ecology to "sustain an indefinite expansion of productive forces deals the final blow to the belief in progress." According to Lasch, it was the promise of universal abundance which sustained the egalitarian implications essential to liberalism's moral authority. "To speak of any limits at all is another way of speaking about the plight of liberalism, which has been predicated on unlimited economic expansion and the notion that a steady growth in consumer demand will sustain an ever expanding market." Clearly, liberalism's socio-economic agenda cannot be universalized because the extension of Western standards of living world-wide would mean ecological desolation.

Contrasting the original 19th century concept of liberalism (designed to keep government to a minimum) with today's liberal leviathan seeking to legislate morality and manage every aspect of daily life, Lasch asked whether liberals have betrayed their heritage, as Right-wing critics claim, or whether there is something inherent in liberalism requiring elaborate structures of management, supervision and control. Through all its transformations, two central liberal features have persisted: a commitment to progress and the asssumption that the liberal state could dispense with civic virtue. Whereas the faith in progress has generated many of the difficulties now undermining the liberal state, since "progress" meant large-scale production and the centralization of power, the relegation of civic virtue to the private domain raises the issues addressed by the new populism. Early liberal thinkers

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recognized the need for more public virtue than contemporary liberals are willing to admit, and even today's liberals advocating a minimal view of citizenship "smuggle" it in "between the cracks of their free-market ideology." This is why 19th century liberals emphasized the family so much. Lasch's point was that, given the severity of today's crisis, "we should probably turn to submerged traditions in American life, which have been overshadowed but never altogether extinguished by the reigning political creed."

This recovery of "submerged traditions" may inhibit the present process of general deculturation predicated on the Right's repudiation of "secular humanism" and the Left's denunciation of "any attempt to uphold a core of common values as cultural imperialism," against which it "demands equal time for minorities." In both cases, the possibility of a common culture is ruled out. Yet the liberal "modernization" of the world implies the creation of a global culture in addition to a global market. But the only global culture liberalism seems able to generate is "the culture of Hollywood, rock and roll and Madison Avenue . . . a culture of hedonism, cruelty, contempt and cynicism." Liberalism has hollowed out society in the name of public order, while forgetting that public order "is not just a function of the state, which can safely be entrusted with the responsibility for education and law-enforcement while citizens go about their private affairs."

Lasch provided no specific solutions, but pointed out that populism "speaks more directly to current pathologies than other political traditions." "It would be foolish to deny its worst features, such as racism, anti-Semitism, anti-intellectualism, etc., but it would be equally foolish to deny its positive features: appreciation of honest work, respect for competence, egalitarian opposition to entrenched privilege, refusal to be impressed by jargon, insistence on holding people accountable for their actions, etc." It may thus provide an alternative to bureaucratic irresponsibility and to the "cult of the victim" presupposed by the politics of entitlement and affirmative action. In Lasch's view, to the extent that populism stands for things most Americans still believe in and are willing to defend, it can generate real popular enthusiasm while providing an alternative to liberalism.

The clarity and elegance of Lasch's presentation generated a lively discussion concerning the details of his analysis, which seemed to fit all too well with the conference's general project of elaborating a "new populism." What ended up occluded in the process, however, were some fundamental differences between the old and the proposed new

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populism. While Lasch's emphasis on what he outlined as "civic virtue" clearly resonated with traditional American folklore, it is unlikely that it can be directly redeployed within the present social context characterized by unprecedented community disintegration and the predominance of the kind of consumerist culture he criticized so well. His civic virtue presupposes a different social fiber: that of 19th century American Protestant communities *at their best*. This model has been historically much easier to admire than implement, as became clear to reformers such as, e.g., Giuseppe Mazzini, who sought to apply it in the 1870s in recently unified Italy. As Mazzini was soon to find out, however, such a model is viable only within a context where particular cultural preconditions have already been met. Otherwise it results in the exclusion of those who, for whatever reason, do not share these traditions and values and triggers racism, chauvinism, etc. — which is what happened in the US prior to the New Deal with respect to Southern European, Catholic or Jewish immigrants, Southern ex-slaves, Asians, and other minorities who had not yet been fully "Americanized" through such homogenizing institutions as universal education, the culture industry, Prohibition, etc.

Lasch knows this all too well, which explains the pessimistic note on which he ends *The True and Only Heaven*. A more careful elaboration of decentralization, refederalization and communitarianism, however, may have been helpful in providing something more than what boiled down to an abstract moralistic critique lacking concrete programmatic anchors. If the best hope for social reconstruction is not with a New Class terminally mired in identity logic and thus unable to re-engage that lived dimension of Being whose exclusion through processes of formal rationalization has resulted in the present crisis of liberalism, but with the ruins of those older traditional communities not yet entirely erased from the social landscape, then a *political* strategy seeking to redeploy civic virtues must begin by nurturing precisely these ruins back to life so that they can generate that individuality without which civic virtue cannot be sustained. A promising way to do so may be by creating the social space within which this process may thrive. Such a strategy necessitates the control or eviction of external economic interests and of the interventionist state from spheres which, in order to be public, must first be autonomous. This is also why fashionable sociological calls for the reconstitution of "civil society" are futile: before it can constitute itself as such, "civil" society needs a *communitarian* structure which no longer exists, and whose reconstitution cannot be formulated as a

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bureaucratic project — no matter how well-funded. In fact, the experience of post-Great Society state intervention to sustain faltering communities is that, far from being a catalyst for social reconstruction, this intervention simply accelerates disintegration.

Although, as Lasch also pointed out, the old populism was never in principle opposed to *all* government intervention, given the changed socio-political landscape, the new one may have to be considerably more critical in this repect: today it is becoming increasingly clear that the only viable government is one that can be held accountable, and that is possible only by reducing governing structures to politically manageable sizes. Clearly, Lasch's call for reconstituting civic virtues seeks to address the problem of normlessness, reconstitute responsible social consciousness and, therefore, render much of the bureaucratic therapeutic apparatus superfluous. Independently of a much broader popular consensus than there is on these matters, however, such a project would also require considerable coercion in order to be generalized or, rather, *enforced* within the present centralized context of social disintegration — a coercion which may undermine the very virtues it was meant to institutionalize, both by coloring these civic virtues with an authoritarian tinge and by exacting too high a social cost in encouraging further disintegration within communities presently organized along diverse principles.

This is why the new populism differs substantially from the old in its emphasis on a genuine federalism fostering community autonomy and decentralizing socio-economic functions. Re-empowered by the fading of the present pseudo-federal Big Brother (and no longer overburdened with the exorbitant taxation it now demands), these communities may be able to develop, within a smaller and therefore more manageable context, those civic virtues impossible to reconstitute and practice on the national level. It is not an accident that communities subject to the least government intervention, such as the Asian, are thriving, while others targeted for maximum penetration, such as the African-American, continue disintegrating at a rapid pace. Those communities with strong, organically developed traditions and customs will thrive and those where they have been homogenized out of existence will not. Those which do not will either learn from the successful ones or disintegrate and be absorbed by the more successful ones — not, however, as autonomous ethnic or national groups, but as eventual integral parts and parcels of existing, thriving, organically changing communities. Lasch's lack of clarity concerning means to guarantee

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effective decentralization and real local autonomy leaves his account far too abstract — a flaw that leads him grudgingly to accept the existing centralized pseudo-federal system and, ultimately, cave in to the otherwise despised liberal social engineering by hinting that the state may be the prime mover of such a project of moral reconstruction.

The Inevitability of Populism?

The concept of populism provided by both Goodwyn's and Lasch's presentations clarified earlier misconceptions, but did not go beyond either criticizing standard accounts of the phenomenon or vindicating its axiological dimensions. Yes, populism has been the victim of bad press and it does provide a model of social life which still makes sense today. Yet its coffin seemed to remain as sealed as it had been before the conference began. Populism still seemed like a nice political place to visit, but not a livable theoretical home. Allegedly, modern society is far too complex to be amenable to restructuring on the basis of crude moanings and groanings of a bunch of Midwestern farmers, Baltic shipyard workers, or burned-out intellectuals still looking for Nirvana after the collapse of communism. This is why it was necessary to re-examine the theoretical underpinnings of conventional academic wisdom about the solidity of modern society — which presumably renders futile any populist challenges — as well as prospects for retaining unchanged fundamental social relations. Could it be that, far from being anathema to the short-run perpetuation of New Class domination, new forms of populism are precisely what is needed to buttress existing relations of domination by providing new rationalizing internal control mechanisms? Far from constituting additional instances of counterproductive artificial negativity, however, an organically generated populism may also develop real alternatives to these sophisticated new ways of perpetuating existing relations of domination. Robert D'Amico and Paul Piccone proceeded to elaborate this quandary with their analyses of the myth and logic of the totally administered society. Originally planned as one paper, the two parts could not be integrated in time, so they were presented separately.

Since traditional Critical Theory's dismissal of all raucous farmers and their equivalents as irrelevant or irreversibly integrated in the very system they oppose has been most forcefully articulated in Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* (Adorno's analyses of "the totally administered society" was never neatly packaged into a book and, at any rate, did not become widely known until well after Marcuse's work had already had

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a major impact), D'Amico began with a re-examination of the main thesis of what had been the "Manifesto" of the 1968 generation. Far from presenting a radically new thesis, however, he pointed out that Marcuse's account of the one-dimensional society was essentially a recycling, a kind of Americanization of the totalitarianism thesis — a discredited Cold War thesis still fashionable in some relatively unsophisticated academic backwaters, but one which was very influential in shaping political thought after WWII. All Marcuse & Co. did was extend it from that Nazism and Stalinism it was originally meant to explain to all advanced industrial societies. Simply put, the thesis never made any sense. To make his case, D'Amico went through the accounts of the thesis provided by Hannah Arendt, Carl J. Friedrich, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Marcuse.

Originally meant to explain Nazism, Arendt's analysis was eventually extended also to Stalinism, but only up to the early 1950s. A careful reading of her book, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, however, reveals considerable confusion, contradictions and so much vagueness that it is impossible to derive from it any clear theory of totalitarianism other than a few impressionistic flashes. Things are not much better with Friedrich and Brzezinski, whose operationalization of the concept turns out to be always too close to particular manifestations of the phenomenon and in need of major modification every time it is applied to other cases or to new developments within the Soviet prototype. Lastly, Marcuse accepts these standard accounts, with the qualification that the system also offers hopes for emancipation under different conditions (true socialism). According to D'Amico, no society can ever attain the level of control predicated by the theory; it would collapse if it ever came close to doing so and, at any rate, the whole approach is by and large a manifestation of the intellectualistic pathologies earlier criticized by Goodwyn.

If totalitarianism, understood as the administration of every facet of life, is a bureaucratic pipe-dream falling prey to identity logic, and if, in order to regulate itself, every society needs feedback mechanisms relying on dimensions of Being which must remain outside the managerial apparatus itself, then opposition is not a political nuisance but a systemic necessity. As such, opposition understood paradigmatically as an extra-bureaucratic phenomenon is not so much a political possibility as a necessary part of any stable society able to regulate itself by means of internal control mechanisms. Before it is possible to determine whether a particular form of opposition, e.g., populism, may be successful in challenging the system, however, it is necessary to specify how it may

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arise in terms of the logic of that system. This was the topic of what was originally planned as the conclusion to D'Amico's argument: Piccone's account of "The Logic of the Totally Administered Society."

Notwithstanding the rejection in principle of the very possibility of the "totally administered society," Piccone argued that such a model is not merely a contemporary aberration but is the other, negative side of that utopia indelibly inscribed in Western consciousness. Predicated on rationality and order, Western teleology projects this utopian society either positively or negatively, as that which energizes Western culture and distinguishes it from all others. The Nietzschean and Heideggerian exposure of the artificiality of the project, while contributing a modicum of self-consciousness, did not in the least make it any less compelling. Objectified originally as Christianity and subsequently as progress, these cultural forms reappear in the 20th century as the construction of communism in its Left variation, and as capitalist accumulation in its Right counterpart. As in the past, however, both versions exhaust themselves in the process of self-realization. Both fall victim to the traditional theological pitfall of idolatry or its secularized Marxist version, reification, in identifying salvation or fulfillment with a particular object rather than with a subjective state: the product displaces the process and undermines what energized its historical trajectory. The history of Western civilization, from the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, the Reformation, the French Revolution, etc., oscillates between the subjective and the objective poles and, while inexorably tending towards the institutional closure, is always ultimately redeemed by the reaffirmation as organic negativity of subjectivity reasserting itself as the monadic form reactivating an otherwise vacuous and fading totality. Within such a context, the resurfacing of the populist moment appears as the most recent expression of this standard mode of redemption.

Today this logic unfolds in two versions: Left and Right. Distrustful of the populace as an agency sufficiently competent to carry out the emancipatory project, the Left constitutes itself first as a Party and then as technocracy to provide the necessary catalyst. Similarly, the neoconservative Right (at least in the US), distrustful not only of the populace but also of its self-appointed revolutionary catalysts, leaves it to the market to facilitate that process of indefinite accumulation which, although no longer defined by a final goal, is nonetheless pursued indefatigably. Both projects fail. In the case of the Left, the catalyst ends up deactivating those revolutionary agents it was meant to energize, while in the case of the Right the process of accumulation begins to stall in

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the mid-1960s with the tendential saturation of everyday life by government regulations. The causes are the same: the deployment of abstract knowledge first as a means of control and organization, then as one of domination to the point that knowledge as mediation occludes what it was originally meant to mediate. To the extent that this process of organization disempowers those whom it organizes and reduces them to objective formal functions, it disengages from life that subjectivity immersed in Being and thus able to control the objectification of the concept. What is lost here in terms of precategorical prehension eventually tends to outweigh what is gained through categorical structuration, thus prefiguring motivation and rationality crises irresolvable by means of more organization and rationalization, i.e., the only standard remedies available to both systems.

These crises manifest themselves as unmanageability, counterproductivity and growing substantial irrationality. The communist system collapses first only because it unfolds its identity logic at a much faster rate. Exactly the same mechanisms are at work within advanced capitalism. Contrary to conventional expectations, the collapse is not a function of too much opposition, but of not enough. Furthermore, having been so thoroughly devastated, when it comes time to pick up the pieces of the disintegrated society the previously disempowered populace can do so only by relying on cultural ruins so deeply rooted that they have managed to survive over 70 years of forced rationalization: religion, ethnicity, nationalism, etc. Thus the resulting Soviet populism threatens to be much more traditional and "raw" than elsewhere in that it will have to be articulated *against* a federalism able to buffer the impact of these pre-modern forms, because any premature federalism identified with the fading central bureaucracy is doomed to fail. Only well after the central apparatus will have totally disintegrated will it be possible for new forms of legitimation to constitute a new federal framework.

While within "really existing" socialism the lack of any autonomous organization or individuality retarded even the awareness that the system was on the verge of collapse until it was too late, in the West in general and the US in particular opposition has eroded at a slower pace, thus remaining as a minimal regulatory mechanism still able to trigger some adjustments well before it is too late. Anti-system politics have thus become so standard that today both parties appropriate them. Both Carter and Reagan ran successfully *against* the Washington establishment (Bush simply followed in Reagan's footsteps), and decentralization,

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community rebuilding, diversification, debureaucratization, etc. have become standard political fare. Similarly, post-Fordism, subcontracting and decentralization are increasingly becoming the most effective rationalization strategies — all predicated on efforts to reconstitute that subjectivity and otherness previously eroded by the very same system. The point is that, confronted with a series of crises it cannot otherwise solve, the very New Class responsible for the system's involution undertakes the reconstitution of autonomous institutions and regulatory opposition in order to prevent its further delegitimation.

As such, the new populism understood as local organizations predicated on organically constituted values and customs seeking to prevent or roll back New Class colonization of everyday life is not merely an abstract political *desideratum*, but an objective requirement of the system itself to permit the retention and extension of precisely that New Class colonization it explicitly opposes. It is neither a matter of the central government forcibly imposing "civic virtue" on a relatively recalcitrant population, nor of spontaneous insurgent movements suddenly taking the political initiative and beginning to reverse over half a century of intense New Class rationalization. Rather, it is the continuation by other means of the same rationalization strategy after it runs against otherwise insurmountable obstacles. Although the most striking result of this policy reversal bears a distinctive New Class imprint as a "multiculturalism" whose only immediate impact is in diversifying the administrative apparatus while leaving everything else in an even worse state of cultural disintegration than before, it also paves the way for genuine populist alternatives predicated on community reorganization and broader institutional changes. To the extent that artificially generated negativity cannot work, since it extends the very logic it is meant to reverse, it is necessary to leave open the possibility for genuine opposition to develop as organic negativity.

Populist vs. Popular Culture

Piccone's peculiar transcendental deduction of a resurgence of populist politics did manage to relate Lasch's civic virtue to objective systemic needs. The demonstration, however, appeared to accomplish far too much. His vindication of populist politics seemed so general as to include not only dead-end New Right proposals seeking to forcibly universalize particularistic values (thus relegitimating a central New Class bureaucracy as the mediational agency), but also multicultural opportunism predicated on the mediatization of pseudo-communities

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based not on concrete territorial criteria such as socio-economic and cultural interaction but on irreconcilable — and thus potentially permanently divisive — traits such as race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, etc. It was time to spell out what constituted real as opposed to pseudo-populist culture. The next paper, by Russell A. Berman, on "Popular Culture and Populist Culture,"[14] began to do just that.

According to Berman, "popular culture" has very little to do with real people or populism, but is, instead, an opportunistic academic device to pass an elitist agenda as democratic politics. To document the phony relation between popular culture and democratic politics, he analyzed an op-ed piece in *The New York Times* by two English professors: *soi-disant* "scholars of popular culture, [who] . . . spend a good deal of . . . time resisting the widespread assumption that people are passive consumers of the mass media." Yet, when this advocacy of popular culture had an opportunity to show real appreciation for popular sentiment, they revealed their covert elitism. The issue was the widespread public support for the Gulf War. Since this support challenged "politically correct" progressive claims regarding popular culture, the popularity of the war was attributed to "propagandistic" television reporting. But the defenders of popular culture also reject the manipulation thesis. So it was a matter of "saving popular culture and dumping popular opinion." Since they could not surrender their preferred cultural object, television, and still had to get "the people" off the hook, they explained the contradiction in terms of war as "the most undemocratic of all activities." Pointing out that war is not necessarily incompatible with democracy, Berman concluded:c"The culture of the people is invoked, with egalitarian pathos, only in order to wage a campaign for the re-division of academic positions, and the people are junked as soon as popular sentiment diverges from that of the liberal elite."

Berman characterized "popular" culture as "cultural class warfare against non-elite groups with their own populist cultures." Thus "popular culture" ends up as the academic extension of the culture industry. In this connection, New Class ideologues often delight in trivial denunciations of Adorno's elitist taste, while being more elitist than Adorno, whose critique of the culture industry was a result of its destruction of the people's pre-industrial culture. In fact, both Horkheimer and

14. Cf. Russell A. Berman, on "Popular Culture and Populist Culture," in *Telos* 87 (Spring 1991), pp. 59-70.

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Adorno took sides with popular strata against the elites of the culture industry, whereas the same cannot be said of today's defenders of popular culture, whose hidden agenda is to colonize any genuinely *populist* culture in the service of New Class interests. This elitist strategy ends up advocating multiculturalism as "a strategy to intervene in ethnic groups and to reorganize their cultures as microcosmic imitations of established canons, while transforming concrete diversity into a cultural apartheid of separate value systems." The same point was elaborated by Russell Jacoby's paper on "Academic Multiculturalism: Instrumentalizing Populism." As a paradigmatic case of artificial negativity, multiculturalism attempts to reconstitute the heterogeneity and otherness the system needs as internal regulatory mechanisms to prevent involution and growing irrationality. As a New Class project, however, it ends up empowering only a multicultural bureaucratic elite to manage the further disintegration of the mediatized "communities" they are allegedly helping to reconstitute.

Liberal Critiques of Populism

The heated discussion of multiculturalism and populism that followed Jacoby's paper was expected and long overdue. After all, although there had been criticism of conservative interpretations of populism, as positions historically foreign to the post-New Left tradition of *Telos*, these accounts had been treated much more politely and respectfully than their Left-liberal counterparts. It is easy to see why: as historical brethren, Left-liberals were under closer scrutiny and had been throughout handled with considerably less tolerance. Because it was expected to be the most controversial part of the conference, their critique of populism had also been left for the closing session.

Whereas most of the conservative accounts had been from perspectives not too familiar with *Telos*' particular Critical Theory reevaluation of populism, the paper by Andrew Fraser on "The Failure of American Populism and the Unfulfilled Need for a Republican Jurisprudence" was a direct critique of an earlier article by Piccone and Ulmen on Schmitt and the plight of European jurisprudence which, notwithstanding the prohibitive title, prefigured the possibility of a new federalist populism. According to that account, since European countries now face the same sort of problems the American states had to solve two centuries ago, a promising institutional solution may be the *ante bellum* US Constitution based on local autonomy and a federal aggregation of the various components in a constitutional framework understood primarily as

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a regulative structure rather than a substantive legal superstructure duplicating and ultimately displacing lower political bodies. Unlike in the US, where the Constitution took a major statist turn after the Civil War, in Europe this may not happen because of the heterogeneity of the federalizing units. As such, Europe promises to develop a political model predicated on truly decentralized units governed on the basis of local traditions and customs, which may be relevant not only for a US increasingly choked by an unwieldy central government oblivious of its own historical roots, but for the rest of the world as well.

Contrary to this account, Fraser argued that it was not the post-Civil War statist involution that was the problem, but "the monarchal traditions of European jurisprudence" deeply rooted in American federalism. Thus, instead of recycling the legacy of Roman law, he called for a return to "the republican roots of civic freedom in the Greek *polis*." If modern American federalism is a "travesty" of constitutionalism, as Piccone and Ulmen claim, it is not because its original spirit — now associated with a lingering populism — has been "corrupted by legal positivism and statism" but because American constitutionalism was subverted from the very beginning by European natural jurisprudence. As for populism, if it is to be identified with a strong federation of autonomous local communities, populists must reject "the legal language of absolute, unitary and indivisible sovereignty." Fraser traced the failure of American populism to "the failure of American lawyers to develop a distinctively republican jurisprudence." What throughout the conference had been assumed to be the principal agents of New Class domination, i.e., lawyers, suddenly reappeared in Fraser as the saviors. Whereas in earlier discussions the creation of new laws was seen as a symptom of the disintegration of previously internalized norms and, therefore, as an expression of a social pathology, in Fraser's terminology "jurisgenerative" processes resurfaced as the lifeblood of a healthy republicanism.

Such an obsessive generation of laws, beyond the wildest dreams of the staunchest legal positivist, may empower lawyers as universal mediators of any transactions, but ultimately delegitimates the ever-changing and proliferating laws as mere contingencies binding only if convenient or closely enforced. The result can only be the collapse of legality as an internalized normative dimension of life into an external burden to be circumvented or, whenever enforcement can be avoided, simply ignored. Clearly Fraser's presentation was predicated on an Enlightenment ideology whereby abstract individuals engage as pure minds in interactions governed by pure reason. Consequently, these 18th century

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fictions invent "civil society" as an aggregation of voluntary associations or "corporate body politics" and search for "new sources of legal meaning" to construct adequate institutional frameworks. This is why Fraser does not know what to do with "organic communities," traditions and customs which have not been codified into laws and regulations. As with his 18th century precursors, he relegates all organic relations to irrationality and darkness, at the price of feeding into the dialectic of enlightenment — something ultimately remediable only through a mimesis with nature, i.e., the rediscovery of precisely that organicity and concrete individuality previously discarded as pre-rational residues.

Within such a context it is understandable why Fraser cannot deal with any "sovereignty," which he must reject outright as a monarchal residue terminally imbedded in European jurisprudence. Within his enlightenment ideology, decisions can only be mechanical deductions reached by counting assenting or dissenting votes or by acknowledging necessity. And what makes these votes legitimate are "rights" recognized in the individuals by the corporate bodies within which they belong. Within enlightenment ideology freedom turns into terror. So it must be banned to the most hidden crevices of abstract individuality — so hidden that it cannot be allowed to surface even as individual sovereignty. Having eliminated freedom and choice from his civil society as a mechanical aggregation of voluntary associations made up of subjects who can only act out the roles dictated by their social location, Fraser avoids the issue of *legitimation* which underlies any concept of sovereignty and thinks he can dispose of the notion altogether. This is a worldview of New Class lawyers, who see themselves as mediating between independent sources of authority. The model Fraser ended up proposing, however, was the existing one. His ideal type has long since been objectified and has brought about the kind of disintegration he now proposes to remedy simply by recycling the pristine original version of this model uncontaminated by the consequences of its own application.

Contrary to Fraser, the new federalist populism is predicated on a much more concrete vision of society composed of people endowed not with abstract minds but with embodied "spirit" — what constitutes and is constituted by social reality as "objective spirit," i.e., something permeated by living culture, traditions and customs. Organic communities are made of these internalized components which, as such, can only appear to enlightenment ideologists as pre-rational pathologies. Members of these communities become socialized within them through a process of *Bildung* whereby their very personality already embodies modes of

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behavior which, in Fraser's model of abstract individuality, must be externally imposed by a "jurisgenerative" community of New Class lawyers. Thus, whereas from a populist perspective the deployment of laws already betrays a pathological predicament, i.e., failure to internalize norms, in Fraser's account it is progress and emancipation.

For Fraser, the present predicament of social disintegration, super-legality and general involution is analyzed in traditional economistic terms: political interference by particularistic economic interests prevents the New Class from carrying out its republican project, i.e., the creation of an autonomous "civil society." The populist diagnosis is rather different. The source of the problem is the reduction of concrete individuals (with all their superstitions and defects) to abstract individuals manipulable by New Class social engineering which "rationalizes" organic communities out of existence. Thus the solution is not merely to checkmate capitalist interests as particularistic and, therefore, opposed to a superior "general interest" championed by New Class operatives and lawyers — Hegel's naive notion of a neutral state bureaucracy. The collapse of "really existing" socialism clearly indicates where such a project leads. Rather, it is a matter of reconstituting concrete individuality by allowing organic communities to develop and thrive, free of New Class bifurcations of "spirit" into a "popular" body and a New Class "mind."

This is why the model of the Greek *polis* cannot be allowed to displace the Roman *jus gentium* built into the original version of the US Constitution. The civic virtues Fraser advocates can avoid deteriorating into abstract formalities legitimating a managerial ethos only if they develop spontaneously within organic communities as internalized norms. This spontaneous process can benefit greatly from the experiences of other organic communities, but cannot be accelerated by a cosmopolitan New Class imposing external standards under the pretense of pseudo-universal validity. At any rate, universality cannot be such unless mediated through and through by that particularity it cannot thereby claim to unilaterally emancipate. A genuine federal model derived from Roman jurisprudence and integrating English common law traditions within its decentralized communitarian parts protects against the pseudo-universalizing impulses of self-rightous Greek aristocrats' pretenses to have direct access to ideal Platonic forms and thus free to force all "lower forms of Being" to measure up to them. The concrete implications for intellectuals is that their reference point can no longer be abstract utopian models of "civil society" against which organic communities are to be judged — a predicament leading either to the forced consumption of

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hemlock or to more "enlightened" despotisms *qua* technocratic rule. Rather, intellectuals must remain rooted in their particular communities, while at the same time representing and mediating this particularity within the broader federal framework in which the various communities participate, and vice versa. Such a role, however, is easier to enunciate in theory than to practice.

In the conference's last session, devoted to "really existing" populism in Poland, David Ost and Mira Marody discussed some of the problems that arise when populism concretizes into a political force in a contemporary context. Ost explored some of Polish populism's unresolved ambiguities, noting that official Solidarity has been accused of replacing dependence on one external alien (Russia) with another (the West). Although market society is also "alien," people seem to want it. Furthermore, the same kind of suspicion of "inorganic forces" that inspired independence has resurfaced time and again as anti-Semitism. As Ost suggested, once in power populist leaders do not seem to behave all that differently from the elites they displaced. Walesa's embrace of the market come-what-may was even more unconditional than that of his competitors and, as labor minister, Kuron openly admitted he could no longer stand for what he had stood for in the past.

Populism thus betrays an ambiguous legacy in Poland. From a more social-psychological perspective, Marody buttressed such an analysis by pointing out how recent survey research shows that, contrary to Western "civil society" ideologists' projections of their own democratic delusions onto the Polish people, what the latter really want is simply a better life understood primarily in terms of the availability of more consumer goods. Any party or candidate advocating a program along these lines will be taken seriously. In recent elections, people were quick to place their faith in political leaders promising general affluence, while everyday political participation remained low. According to a survey, democracy itself is widely understood not so much as having to do with political freedom but as the government's guarantee of the "good" life. These symptoms of mass politics in Poland in particular and Eastern Europe in general render the region susceptible to what Marody called "totalistic organization" — presumably a euphemism for old fashioned fascism. While she stressed that populists have been concerned primarily with searching for better leaders, Ost countered that Goodwyn's tracing of the worker-activist tradition revealed that there was some tendency toward radical social restructuring. Yet such "networks" were never in a position to actually institutionalize anything.

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The *liberals* did — and in so doing changed the course of Solidarity as populist elites grew closer to their liberal counterparts outside Poland and lost their organic connection to indigenous populist roots.

On the whole, although understandably distrustful of *any* government because of the communist experience, populists still expected the delivery of many more public services than they were willing to pay for. This did not sound too different from voters' behavior in the West and indicated the extent to which, without substantial reforms in social and political structures, the mechanical transplant of market economics would not substantially change much, at least in people's everyday life, other than displacing a communist elite with its capitalist counterpart. Unless regrounded within relatively autonomous communities independent of a strong paternalistic central government, Polish populism risks the authoritarian involution of other recent populist phenomena (e.g., Peronism). The introduction of Harvard economics also means the transposition of its shortcomings into a socio-political context which, unlike the US, does not have a grassroots infrastructure sufficiently strong to buffer its more detrimental implications. Similarly, at the level of political reorganization, the collapse of the old has not meant the automatic sprouting of the new, but the mechanical reproduction of Western ideal types, unaware of their dark sides.[15]

The lessons of East European populism are yet to be drawn. From what seems to have transpired so far, however, they point to the need to undergird any new populism with a strong communitarianism. Such a framework would require carefully thought-out federal structures predicated more on the Swiss than on the current US model, i.e., an institutional framework closer to the US *ante bellum* period. If long-suppressed traditions and customs are to be successfully reactivated, however, they will have to be simultaneously demystified and reconstituted in terms of lived experiences, previously unforeseen problems, and a dire awareness of all their past pitfalls.

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15. So far attempts in the USSR to develop a new constitution do not seem to go beyond the transposition of the US model *sic et nunc*. Rather than rethinking the fundamental unresolved contradictions within the US Constitution which eventually led to the Civil War and, in its wake, to the statist involution which threatens to generate most of the structural problems responsible for the Soviet collapse, what Sandel calls the Soviet counterparts of Hamilton and Madison seem to be obsessed with details of the "really existing" US Constitution such as amendments mandating balanced budgets! See Michael Sandel, "The Federalists,"in *The New Republic* (Oct. 7, 1991), pp. 11-12.

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Rethinking "Populism": Paradoxes of Historiography and Democracy

Lawrence Goodwyn

It has been a while since Enlightment ideas about natural rights first translated into the 18th century democratic revolutions. As an inheritance, democracy has long since attained settled cultural sanction. But only *as an idea*. As a practice, it remains severely constrained in multiple warps that disfigure social governance and daily social relations. It is a commonplace to blame this state of affairs on the persistence of elite forms of social control articulated within existing "capitalist" or "socialist" systems. That all societies are governed by elites is almost a tautology. Even when non-elites gain power, the rules of order they codify into customs have the purpose of providing ethical protection for themselves as a privileged stratum. Accordingly, what is generally understood as "culture" is an amalgam of ideas, values, customs and enforcing mechanisms meant to protect inherited forms of governance and the systems of privileges they enshrine. Thus, the history of political thought can be seen as an elite cultural phenomenon in that it constitutes philosophies privileging an orderly continuity of governance. Historically, the price of order has been the maintenance of hierarchy.

The idea of democracy, however, is too inclusive to permit rigid confinement within a permanent hierarchy. Elite forms distort social relations because they coerce people into silence. The emotional price paid for participation in inherited rules of order not only ensures the reproduction of democratic yearnings in each new generation but also stimulates philosophical speculation. Consequently, the idea of democracy remains philosophically radical.

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The acceptance of democracy, even within decidedly non-radical elite circles, is facilitated by the aforementioned cultural commonplace: it is easy for empowered elites to live with it as *an idea* because, as a practice, it persists only in truncated forms. Modern politics takes place within the tension between the idea of democracy and elite reality. Yet, it is difficult to uncover much historical evidence of such a tension. Surprisingly, both radicals and traditionalists seem to share the same elite set of binoculars through which they peer at modern society. The latter is rarely approached concretely. Here "concretely" is the key: it refers to that social activity that lurks beneath elite discussions. This kind of specificity is routinely missing from the evidence scholars adduce in interpreting social realities. The consequences are significant, for they shape the very language employed to discuss politics and social life. Thus, communitarian and hierarchical relations as parts of social life are rarely the focus of sustained inquiry. Scholars routinely deploy such broadly holistic terms ("workers," "the intelligentsia," "post-industrial society," "post-modern culture") that discrete human agency virtually disappears because the potential actors themselves have been rendered invisible. Such holistic descriptive entities are inherently static and remain so even when the social milieu in which people such as "the intelligentsia" or "the workers" function is seen in a state of flux.

What tends to be obscured under this linguistic blanket are the internal dynamics of social movements — especially during periods traumatized by "revolutionary movements." This is a remarkable fact since the entire subject of "revolution" — how to have one or how to govern so as to prevent one — is such a central focus of speculation and endeavor. Despite the extensive existing literature concerning political insurgency in general and revolutions in particular, "the politics of protest" tend to be misperceived because the categories of analysis used to interpret it are routinely both too vague and too rigid to grasp the historically decisive dynamics. Most studies of political insurgency routinely avoid specificity through the invocation of widely sanctioned general descriptions which *substitute* for empirical research. These sanctioned terms can be misleadingly employed to suggest scholarly familiarity with non-elite sectors of society such as "the workers," "the peasants," or "the masses" or they can characterize these broad sectors politically through the complacent deployment of such terms as "petit bourgeoisie," "populist," "provincial," etc.

Isolated here are habits of social description that have materialized out of essentially untested cultural assumptions that are so ingrained as

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to be virtually invulnerable to discussion. If democratic forms are to have serious social meaning, it is obvious that people other than elites need to participate in experiencing these forms. This is an old and honorable idea, grounded in various visions of society traceable through the English commonwealth tradition back to the emergence of the Greek *polis*. Yet, the bloody history of the 20th century has not been kind to such impulses. Today a great deal of resignation reigns where democratic visions once reposed. What was considered "vision" is now dismissed as hopelessly "visionary." A weary skepticism is now deemed sophisticated to the extent it signals a worldview free of "utopian" or "romantic" perspectives associated with anything smacking of an unresigned democratic premise. It is considered naive to apply criteria that fail this test of narrowness. It is therefore advisable to preliminarily explore the categories of political analysis whereby contemporary radicals and conservatives collectively express their resignation and peer at "society" through narrow binoculars. This means to approach democracy as *historical practice* and, in so doing, confront both the ideas and the practices, when they have occurred, of popular democratic phenomena.

Surprisingly, outside of a tiny group of specialists whose work has not successfully penetrated the surrounding cultural terrain, the process through which ideas translate into action has been routinely ignored or tangentially considered. The shared presumption — almost never empirically tested — is that ideas as such generate historical action. Clearly, Marx assumed this to be the case. He devoted little energy to discussing what kind of social action may bring about revolution. It simply happens ("the expropriators are expropriated") if prior engineering is "correctly" performed by properly "conscious" agents. The revolution would simply follow. In this manner, tactical clarity, masked as theory, was mobilized to reduce the visibility of the contingency inherent in social action.

The assumption that ideas are naturally endowed with a special power to generate action is by no means restricted to theorists. Two historical examples of popular democratic movements — the agrarian revolt in 19th century America and the rise of Solidarity in contemporary Poland — provide a convenient comparative framework inasmuch as one is rural and presumably farmer-based, the other urban and the result of workers' mobilization.[1] Furthermore, one is a popular

1. Cf. Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Province: The Populist Movement in America* (New

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insurgency against capitalist domination and the other a mobilization against Leninist domination. It is also convenient that the first chose to call itself "populist" and the other has been so characterized, both by opponents and supporters. Yet, "populism" is one of those terms that have been employed so indiscriminately that political science might be better served if it were quietly dropped. It seems a suggestive idea which, however, conveys little specificity. Once clarified, however, the term is useful in illuminating certain predominant assumptions at work within modern culture.

Toward this end, it is necessary to clear away some historical underbrush that obscures "populism." When the term first appeared — in 19th century Russia — it captured some political specificity.[2] Historically, "populism" surfaced a second time in America, to describe the revolt of Southern and Western farmers who, in the 1890s, created an insurgent political institution: the People's Party. Soon, however, they disappeared. But they did leave in their wake an enduring cultural residue among intellectuals — the belief that "populist" movements derive their ideological content from intellectuals. Furthermore, it was assumed that this type of political vision, if not originally flawed, becomes easily muddled in transit.

The necessary point of departure is the intellectual residue left by this misreading. As cultural memory, populism, American style, has been most tellingly shaped by Richard Hofstadter. Much of the tendentious underbrush about "Populism" is of Hofstadter's making. In his celebrated work, *The Age of Reform*, he portrays the populist revolt as a generally ill-tempered, nativistic, anti-Semitic expression of popular boobery.[3] The movement was seen as grounded in a nostalgic misreading of a past agrarian Arcadia. It was an idyllic universe that, according to would-be agrarian democrats, had somehow been hijacked by malefactors of great wealth who were systematically subverting the republic's original promise. It is clear, however, that Hofstadter did not look

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York: Oxford University Press, 1976); *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); *Breaking the Barrier: The Rise of Solidarity in Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Romman Lata, *The Roots of Solidarity: A Political Sociology of Poland's Working-Class Democratization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

2. It designated the political movement of a sector of the Russian intelligentsia which "went to the countryside" to politicize the peasantry in support of the Czarist regime's structural reforms. "Movement" may be too grand a term to describe this effort; it may be more accurately seen as a political tendency — something a bit more than a wistful longing but less than a sophisticated organizing strategy.

3. Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York: Random House, 1955).

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closely *within* the movement itself. Taking his cue from the role of intellectuals in Russian Populism,[4] he focused on "the educated classes" he saw as responsible for constructing a romantic "agrarian myth" on which farmers subsequently based their movement. In a dazzling display of erudition, he went over the whole of Western culture in search of agrarian romantics among the world's non-agrarians. He found them everywhere: among the ancients (Horace), among English poets (Oliver Goldsmith), French physiocrats (Crevecoeur), and the American founding fathers (Paine, Freneau — even Alexander Hamilton). These scribblers created such an energizing portrait of rural virtue that American farmers, finding little of that in the emerging industrial world of the 19th century, sallied forth to recreate what they took to be their past agrarian Eden. Grounded in such a hopeless predicament, the farmers' movement was born in irrationality and, accordingly, soon faded.

So compelling was Hofstadter's portrait of mythmaking that neither he nor his contemporaries paused to note that his interpretation of agrarian politics had failed to look into the *internal* structure of the agrarian movement itself. Hardly an American farmer was visible in the elaborate edifice of wistful memory Hofstadter put forth as the energizing core of American Populism. It is instructive to note the specific research Hofstadter failed to carry out. As a political phenomenon, the agrarian movement was not something that began in a time or a place or in a fathomable social and political context. It was not a discernible movement that over time found a way to recruit some two million adherents or that eventually fashioned a broad political agenda challenging new industrial power relations. In point of fact, Hofstadter did not uncover the origins and development of populism. Recruitment was not perceived as a category of analysis and the political ideas generated by the insurgent experience (whatever those experiences might have been) were not analyzed because they were not uncovered. Seen through the literary efforts of long gone writers and politicians, populism had simply "happened." Pathetic as it was, the idea had moved to action in a telepathic burst. As such, it was not a "movement" at all but merely an attitude that grew out of a myth. Populism was a static entity that could be described in static terms: it was "romantic," a "yearning," etc.

While this is not very serious work, such was precisely the galvanizing point: this sort of "mass politics" need not be taken seriously. To

4. The blithely condescending tints that colored Hofstadter's portrait of the agrarian movement suggest that he may have subconsciously seen American farmers as surrogate East European peasants with a corresponding penchant for pogroms.

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the extent this depiction became hypostatized into an unconscious working assumption, intellectuals came to approach condescendingly any and all subsequent populist phenomena. This research strategy — actually an untested cultural hypothesis — became Hofstadter's lasting legacy. It resonated as broadly as it did among conservatives and radicals alike because it seemed to confirm a prior suspicion derived from everyday life. For conservatives, self-generated popular politics was disorderly, uninstructed in the governing arts of compromise and, therefore, uncontrollable. For radicals, it was not radical enough.

For the moment, it is sufficient to note a paradox. Among social historians — scholars who study popular phenomena — the world of populism constructed by Hofstadter now languishes in ruin.[5] Recent research has shown that the agrarian movement was unusually well organized within a far-flung base of production and marketing cooperatives that eventually extended out to 40 states. It was years in the making, connecting two million recruits in what became over time a serious political agenda. The ideology of the movement codified in the 1892 Populist platform evolved out of concrete political lessons gradually learned in prior economic struggles for what agrarian organizers called "the cooperative commonwealth."

As is usually the case with large groups, not every American who came to identify with the third party effort lived up to its stated objectives. Yet, on close inspection, the populist agenda has turned out to be broadly egalitarian and humanistic, extending to underlying issues of race and gender as well as economics. The cooperative movement and its critique of major party politicians who opposed agrarian economic initiatives, provided the populist rank and file with an organic new understanding of American commercial relations. In the process of building marketing and purchasing cooperatives in the teeth of opposition from railroads, banks, supply houses and agricultural marketing structures, populists became gradually aware of the ability of concentrated economic power to shape not only the economy and the political process, but culture itself. This new awareness had such an impact on the lives of millions of Americans who were not farmers that movement activists felt they could generalize their recruiting message.

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5. Today Hofstadter's interpretation lies buried under a mountain of countervailing evidence assembled over the past quarter century by, among many others, Walter T. K. Nugent, *The Tolerant Populists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963); Bruce Palmer *"Man Over Money": The Southern Populist Critique of American Capitalism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

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Third party advocates thus became willing to take political risks in going well beyond the mainstream on "the woman question" (in the West), "the Negro question" (in the South) and "the labor question" in both regions. These departures from conventional cultural mores and the tension they generated within American constituencies where populists sought to recruit, did not come into existence without some psychic strain. Nevertheless, the lived experience of "populism" clearly tilted the agrarian movement toward egalitarian positions.[6] Recent research has shown that the third party was informed by a gradually developed analysis of the economy rather than "nostalgia." There were, *in fact*, commercial exploiters of farmers, and they behaved in ways close to how the populists said they did.[7]

In any case, any presumed "agrarian myth" associated with the movement has been found to be a product of Hofstadter's complacent research assumptions and his instinctive condescension toward reformers whose development he had not studied and whose economic analyses he therefore did not know. The lightly researched but eloquently written analysis of what he took to be the essence of the movement — the informing power of the "educated classes" — was a distant view from outside the phenomenon presumably under study. In the end, Hofstadter's findings were flawed because his static categories of analysis were inadequate to the social realities he sought to understand. Whatever American Populism was, it remained beyond his analytical range.

Yet, Hofstadter won his war. Because his findings harmonized well with the conventional wisdom of elite culture, while at the same time confirming them as guides to historical inquiry, his characterization of "populism" as an incoherent political phenomenon has survived as the single most influential account available, energized at a psychological level by a lingering aura of anti-Semitism. Hofstadter's legacy confirms for radicals that populist politics is not really radical and, for traditionalists,

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6. For example, in Kansas, a center of the movement, Walter Nugent's sustained research has shown that populism was neither nativist nor anti-Semitic, self-consciously concerned with the here and now rather than nostalgic and, as the title of his study indicated, broadly "tolerant." Cf. Nugent, *op. cit.*; and Norman Pollack, "Fear of Man: Populism, Authoritarianism, and the Historian," in *Agricultural History*, No. 39 (April 1965), pp. 59-67.

7. Indeed, the elaborate but yet unstudied populist proposal on the nation's monetary system redefined the relation of central bankers to the rest of the citizenry. It did so with such democratic fiscal sophistication that recent discussions concerning the causes of the debt crisis and the "capital shortage," meant to explain the current trauma in the banking structure, constitute, in comparison, a shallow exercise in political obscurantism and public deception.

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that it is a loose cannon. The verdict was clear: at worst, a "populist" was a menace; at best, someone who had more heart than head.

This denouement is the product of a vague but pervasive attitude that continues to condition analyses of all forms of popular assertion that can be fitted under the rubric "populist." The reading of political pleas as pure intellectual expressions structurally determines which kind of historical evidence is perceived to be relevant and which is not. This distanced approach articulated at leisure, from one's book-lined study, privileges a particular type of historical evidence, i.e., literary evidence. As such, this perspective risks exaggerating the role of producers of literary evidence — Hofstadter's "educated classes." This circular reasoning unwittingly succeeds in effectively removing the population from any kind of coherent causative role in politics. The call for a neutral approach to this kind of material is not welcome advice to offer to those who are themselves engaged in producing literary materials. Indeed, this caveat seems to diminish the political role of intellectuals in history. That is not the intention of the present analysis.

Existing scholarship on American Populism cannot be described as a paradox; the anomaly lies in a contradiction that transcends disciplinary lines. While the eventual impact of "the new social history" on the collective understanding of the past is still unclear, the new evidence generated over the past quarter century, detailing the intricate tensions suffusing the American experience, has undermined "intellectual history" as practiced in the 1950s, during its Hofstadterian heydey of academic respectability. It is now widely accepted by historians that the kind of sweeping theoretical investigations that were once the special province of "intellectual history" must — if they are to retain a modicum of shelf life — be "socially grounded."[8] It follows that causal connections between the intellectual and the social have to be empirically verified if new Hofstadterian collapses are to be avoided. What is required is a mode of analysis that bears on the social and political realities of the discrete phenomena being investigated. To "find" such discrete evidence, one must look into the phenomenon itself. The era of confident, Hofstadterian interpretation-sans-evidence is over.

What is even less in dispute among social historians is the paradox

8. This is to say that ideas associated with, say, religious world views (Herbert W. Schneider, *The Puritan Mind* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1958), W.J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Knopf, 1941) or, to return to the subject at hand, social movements (Norman Pollack, *The Populist Mind* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1967) need to be seen as containing both an intellectual and a social dimension.

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itself: their discussions concerning the interplay of ideas and action in history take place almost entirely outside contemporary political science, sociology and cultural theory. In these circles, subjects such as "populism" continue to be seen preponderantly in Hofstadterian terms.

The way Polish Solidarity is currently understood illustrates this cognitive dissonance. The Polish movement of 1980-81 is seen as following the historical trajectories of Russian populism or the Hofstadterian take on American populism, i.e., Solidarity is depicted as a popular social formation that derived its organizational and programmatic ideas from outside intellectuals. This conventional view, set down in scores of articles and books on Solidarity, privileges the work of a group of Warsaw intellectuals, led by Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuron, and Jan Jozef Lipski. Having organized themselves in a group known as "KOR," these Warsaw intellectuals, wrote manifestos, especially a particular one in 1979 that, in Lipski's words, allegedly "prepared the consciousness of the workers for the strikes."[9] According to journalists such as Garton Ash, this interpretation can be neatly summarized: KOR taught the workers "how to have occupation strikes" and "what to demand."[10] Intellectuals taught workers what to do and workers proceeded to do it. As a Polish-born, American-trained sociologist summarized this conventional interpretation, "No force other than the working class can challenge the powerful political elite in the People's Democracies, but this class must be provided with the leadership of more enlightened people."[11] This brief summary catches the essential elements of the Polish drama seen through the writings of people like Michnik and Lipski, or through the influence of their views.

Unfortunately, this reading is a very distant, very Hofstadterian view. It is grounded in literary material produced entirely outside the social formation of the Baltic workers that generated the Polish movement. The evidence from within the movement fundamentally challenges this intelligentsia-centered view. Baltic workers did not require instruction either in occupation strikes or the merits of free trade unions. Both were an integral part of the prewar working class heritage — a legacy better developed in Poland than in most other Western societies. After being hammered into silence in the postwar by the security police, these

9. Jan Josef Lipski, *KOR* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1985), p 424; Adam Michnik, "KOR i Solidarnösc," in *Zeszyty Historyczne*, No. 64 (1984), pp. 67-106.

10. Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1983), p. 24.

11. Stanialaw Majkowski, *People's Poland: Patterns of Social Inequality and Conflict* (Westport, CO: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 153.

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shop floor traditions resurfaced in the 1950s, were again repressed, and then reappeared with an immense emotional and programmatic power during the 1970 "December massacre" of workers on the Baltic Coast. It was amid the terrifying carnage of this repression that Baltic workers first pioneered the organizational concept of an "interfactory strike committee" as a new and more powerful instrument for organizing free trade unions independent of party control.

It is important to note the specific nature of this achievement. The prewar occupation strike had been one of the most dramatic weapons available to industrial workers mobilized against employers. Leninism suffocated that formula with a challenge the prewar labor heritage could not answer: how to strike against a boss who controlled the State? The interfactory structure provided an answer by raising the stakes to a new level. But, in 1970, the transforming potential of the new strategy was smashed so quickly that it could not be effectively tested.

The pivotal exercise in self-education took place after 1970, as politicized Baltic workers from separate enterprises came together, led occupation strikes, underwent periodic police detentions, returned to society, and continued to create social structures independent of the the party. The poised "presidium" of the 1980 interfactory committee — the directing summit of the workers' confrontation with the state — was but a formal surfacing of a community of Gdansk activists who had activated themselves before KOR was even formed. It was this experienced worker presidium which in August 1980 consistently turned aside the ill-considered KOR advice to retreat from the first Gdansk demand. And it was this demand for a trade union independent of party control that, when attained, became the basis of Solidarity.

This is not how Solidarity is generally understood. These dynamics tend to diminish the role played by those Warsaw intellectuals living far away from the Baltic coast — the people heralded by Garton Ash and other Poland watchers who take their interpretive cues from them. The awkward fact is that KOR's best known organizational strategist, Jacek Kuron, opposed the formation of free trade unions when they first appeared in 1978; he opposed the first Gdansk demand of August 1980; he concealed its stark clarity in his advisory distributed to the foreign press on August 18th; he approved a public plan that KOR issued against it on August 25th; and he opposed it throughout the remainder of the crisis. The lengths to which he and other members of the democratic intelligentsia went to try to induce a worker retreat, and the ease with which workers resisted this ill-timed and uninformed

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strategic advice, raise the most fundmental questions as to who "raised" whose "consciousness" so as to bring Solidarity into being.

The stark reality is this: beyond the basic point of contention over the central issue of free trade unions, most advice given to workers by Kuron, Michnik, et al. was tangential to the struggle at hand because Warsaw intellectuals did not know about, and thus did not understand, the interfactory structure of cooperation that had gradually materialized on the Baltic coast. It was a world Warsaw intellectuals were wholly unfamiliar with. Indeed, all of Michnik's attempts to instruct Westerners about the evolving dynamics of the Polish movement — and these writings occasionally include thoughtful geopolitical insights — have been, and remain, consistently uninformed concerning the internal dynamics of the Polish movement. Michnik writes comfortably within the Hofstadterian tradition: elegantly, but on assumptions inappropriate to the evidence. Like Hofstadter, he has many emulators beside Majowski and Garton Ash.

Though KOR's omissions are noteworthy, what the intellectuals' interpretation concretely conveys is also instructive. The reading of Warsaw observers served the short- and long-term political self-interest of the Polish intelligentsia in general and of the KOR group in particular. The KOR interpretation buttressed the group's frequently advanced and consistently rebuffed claims to guiding influence in the subsequent life of Solidarity. This sort of connection, of course, is something historians routinely encounter; participants' perceptions are routinely suffused with partisan motives. The more interesting question, however, is: since Western observers do not share the partisanship of Warsaw intellectuals, why should they find the account of these Warsaw intellectuals so persuasive? Michnik's motives are obvious. But how can one explain Garton Ash?

Dealing with this problem requires going beyond Poland to enter the global arena of contemporary assumptions about populist politics. At first sight, Polish intellectuals and their Western surrogates seem persuasive because, leaving specific Polish nuances aside, the general assumption of the programmatic role of intellectuals coincides with widespread understandings of what constitutes "political consciousness." The presumed role of KOR also harmonizes with conventional understandings of how "consciousness" is "formed," "raised," and otherwise nurtured through the production of manifestos and other literary calls for "action." Operative here is the process through which private aspirations are understood to move to purposeful public activity, through which ideas translate into action. It is generally assumed that

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what connects ideas to action is "consciousness." Thus, only adequately conscious people can act politically.

But what is "adequate"? In the various cultures of the world, people have a pronounced tendency to behave the way they do because they have been persuaded to conform to certain customs they are taught to regard as "normal." This process of ideological acculturation is not finely honed or efficient; some people in every culture learn their lessons less fully than others. While internalizing a number of mannerly ways, they also learn a variety of alternative lessons not sanctioned by cultural authority. Such people are, therefore, routinely critical of received cultural instruction. Because of this, social life intermittently exhibits unanticipated surprises.

When it takes an organized form, all such deviant behavior may be designated as "the politics of protest." The social activity suggested by this politics of protest, however, is definitely not normal. To grasp this abnormality, it is necessary to be clear about those acts that intellectuals routinely regard as normal within the "received culture" of any society. Though the formulas for this conduct, variously familial, ethnic, geographical and socio-political, are elaborate and contradictory, they share the educational purpose of teaching new generations how to live. Here is the starting point of "politics." Throughout history, in most societies most of the time, most of what passes as politics takes place within the parameters of received traditions. People may not approve of some or most of their inherited customs, but they accept existing rules for the simple reason that they do not know how to go about altering the framework within which they are caught.

As such, most "ideas" do not translate into "action" because people are afraid to act on them: they simply do not know what is safe to do. The problem is one of power and the social fear that authority can implant in people. Power intimidates in ways that are immobilizing. Visible here is what may be described as the barrier of fear. It is a central component both of "culture" and of "consciousness." Unfortunately, this organic relation of the powerful to the powerless is routinely ignored in analyses of populist politics. Since this relation conditions daily life, the resulting explanations of "politics" end up oversimplified. People who object to one or more features of the received culture, i.e., most people, but do not seem to do anything about it, are considered "apathetic." Here "consciousness" comes abruptly into play: to become real, i.e., to become historical actors, apathetic people must have their consciousness "raised."

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This tradition's analysis of the rise of Solidarity in Poland would focus on which Poles knew enough to "raise the consciousness" of enough other Poles to make Solidarity possible, i.e., to transform ideas about "freedom from the party" into activities aimed at achieving that end. The common assumption is that social and political "consciousness" is a purely intellectual phenomenon. From this premise it is easy to slide into the further assumption that people's consciousness is "raised" by reading manifestos or other literary exhortations. Most intellectuals are also victims of the understandable occupational hazard that thinking about politics and society inexorably entails that thought itself is the energizing component of political activity. This was Hofstadter's main problem. It explains why, when analyzing populist politics, there seems to be little need to study the connection between ideas and actions. Writing down an idea becomes, without further ado, the *cause* of any subsequent social activity that seems to resemble that idea.

Large-scale democratic social movements such as Polish Solidarity and American Populism indicate that consciousness is not shaped in such an antiseptically intellectual manner. Rather, as the activities of Baltic shipyard workers shows, the concrete social knowledge that shaped the structure of the movement was experimentally gained. The specific understandings that emerge are a product of the impact collective activity can have on private fears. "Apathetic" or fearful people can be persuaded to challenge sanctioned authority when they can see that, as a result of organizing efforts, inherited power relations are changing or are likely to change. It is the psychological impact of this organizing achievement on inherited patterns of cultural intimidation that pushes people through the barrier of fear and into public life. This process is extremely difficult for "organizers" to direct. Despite widespread grievances in all societies at all times, large-scale social movements are comparatively rare because the cultural obstacles impeding their construction are so immense. Yet this is precisely what the large-scale agrarian cooperatives achieved in 19th century America and what the interfactory strike structure achieved during the Polish August of 1980.

This is the precise sense in which social knowledge can be understood as grounded in concrete experience. Movements generate "consciousness" by creating social circumstances which transform the way people perceive political possibility. In Poland, the elaborate organizational and programmatic structure fashioned by Baltic maritime workers was the product of decades of insurgent experimentation. This experience provided them with a strategic sophistication beyond that attained by

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outside intellectuals whose own experiences in challenging state power, being socially narrower, were also less instructive in mobilizing democratic pressure against the ruling party.

In this long and embattled period of worker self-organization and self-education, each internalized lesson was paid dearly in stepped up supervisory pressure from the party apparatus, blacklisted worker activists, exile, even death. The group experiences, however, materialized in now well-known actions and beliefs. At the height of the Baltic crisis, Polish intellectuals, uninformed about the elaborate process that had preceded the mobilization, thought workers were naively impetuous in demanding free institutional space in a Leninist state. This was KOR's position, Kuron's, and that of the Polish Catholic Primate.

None of the latter grasped the political potential of three key ideas of the Baltic workers. First, to cope with the party's habit of arresting anyone who undertook aanything independently of its own "leading role," workers protected their representatives by surrounding them with an occupation force of 16,000 strikers. The party would have had to bring in tanks and storm the entire shipyard — in effect arrest 16,000 people — to sever the movement's links. Second, the protest leaders so protected gained far-reaching organizational autonomy extending hundreds of miles beyond the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. This was a product of the consolidation of the Interfactory Strike Committee. Through vigorous recruiting techniques developed within a police state, this organization in 1980 was able to house worker delegates from more than 600 factories throughout the Polish maritime provinces. Eventually, the reach of the strike presidium extended to central Poland and, at the very end, all the way to Silesia. Populated by some 750,000 workers, it exerted unprecedented pressure on the party. The third component was the now famous 21 demands, headed by the call for trade unions independent of the Leninist Party. Remote observers, unaware of the reinforcing power of the first two elements and of the organizing sequence that brought these autonomous structures into being, felt the third feature was a *prima facie* case of "going too far." In contrast, Baltic workers felt they had organized a reasonable shield against party repression because, in the words of a strike presidium member, "things have gone further here," i.e., too far to enable the party to repress by conventional means.

Because KOR people were uninformed about what had taken place in the Baltic coast, they were unprepared to provide sound strategic judgements. The point is not that worker organizers were culturally more "mature," psychologically more "courageous," or politically more

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"militant" than KOR activists but that, over time, they had built discrete strategic insights that went far beyond the limited experiences of opposition Warsaw intellectuals. On its own terms, the worker structure of 1980 led directly to the creation of a self-organized civil society in Poland: the interfactory founding committee became the founding committee of Solidarity. There are at least two ways to respond to these dynamics. As an intellectual, one may react to certain occupational loyalties and shy away from the implications of Solidarity as an autonomous workers' organization. Of course, a number of Polish intellectuals (a most bruised and psychologically embattled group, after years of mindless Party censorship) recoil from the possibility of any diminution of their presumed central role in Solidarity's liberation of Poland. It is also evident from the literature that a number of foreign Poland watchers who have come to share this presumption will similarly resist the obvious. Indeed, it seems as if both groups will continue underemphasizing the role of Baltic workers in order to defend their published works or their self-image as activist intellectuals. This is unfortunate and, in the case of KOR members, unnecessary given the fact that KOR's role, even when redimensioned, remains impressive.

Be that as it may, it is in this class-ridden and therefore intuitively class-conscious cultural environment that the components of political consciousness materialize historically — in Poland or elsewhere. It may be prudent to specify, then, that calling attention to the experiential dimension of "consciousness" does not in itself suggest that the life of the mind is somehow being denigrated. It goes without saying that all political judgments, including grand theories, are inherently a product on an intellectual perspective that is experientially informed in operative but unknown ways. The reasoning processes of even the most complacent intellectual or the most deadline-burdened journalist are nevertheless informed by the totality of their prior experience in the received social realm.

Here an earlier distinction comes into play. Received traditions generate "normal" experiences subtly limited in the range of instructive insights they yield. The very definitions of politics are themselves the product of that speculative creativity that passes as "normal." The appearance of the politics of protest in any society generates new experiences that are emphatically not routine and cannot be considered normal. Just as "normality" depends on one's acquiescence in a received structure of governance and social relations, so the insurgent process, in seeking to transform that structure by shattering its supporting paradigm, generates

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transparently experimental and thus "abnormal" experiences. This highlights discrete historical experiences that simply cannot be analyzed through interpretive frameworks fashioned within received patterns of social relations.

The Polish shipyard workers provide an excellent example. Viewed through the normal binoculars of Warsaw intellectuals, the remarkable Baltic mobilization of 1980 took place along dynamics incomprehensible from the perspective of normality. Both Baltic workers and Warsaw intellectuals "thought about" the confrontation with the state, but the experiential legacies each group brought to bear upon it were very different and yielded contradictory projections concerning what was possible. The most striking feature of the literature on Solidarity is that, as a possible agency, Baltic workers do not appear as relevant actors because they could not have been perceived as such, or even as a category of analysis. They were characterized not on the basis of their activities as "maritime workers" or, more precisely, "shipyard workers in Gdansk" but, rather, on presumed cultural characteristics appended to the static category "the workers." Thus, this social formation existed holistically as a "class," and classes were "known" to possess characteristics which, without research, defined the nature of the political activities of their "members." Here, then, are the hierarchical assumptions imbedded in Majkowski's terse summary of the standard interpretation of Solidarity: "No force other than the working class can challenge the powerful political elite in the People's Democracies, but this class must be provided with the leadership of more enlightened people."[12] Three erroneous assumptions are at play here: a social formation can be easily characterized because it is static — it is a "class;" this static entity has unchanging qualities — workers are not sufficiently "enlightened" to be historical agents; so established are these assumptions that no further research is needed to sustain them.

It has now been almost thirty years since E.P. Thompson argued that a "class" is not what it used to be or what it will become, but only what it appears to be at any given time because of what it does.[13] This argument was grounded in the realization of the contingency of the historical process. Although it is imperative to establish empirically the real social dynamics, the lingering prestige of Hofstadter's approach demonstrates the extent modern social critics fail to grasp the imperative implicit in

12. Majkowski, *op. cit.*

13. Edward P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964).

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Thompson's quietly demanding admonition. We therefore continue to generalize from an inadequate conceptualized research agenda.

The *non sequiturs* that flow from this sanctioned custom are nowhere more deferentially reproduced than in Garton Ash's reportage from afar. After discussing why he saw the activities of the Polish Pope and of KOR intellectuals as essential for the birth of Solidarity, Garton Ash deals summarily with sectors of the population not noted for generating literary materials: "It is naturally difficult to separate the workers' own autonomous political learning process from the direct influence of KOR."[14] In lieu of evidence, he offers two additional sentences that serve as a reprise on KOR's critical role in "raising the consciousness of the proletariat in key industrial centers." In this elliptical manner, the Baltic movement in Poland disappears under the descriptive category "the workers" and "the proletariat" — entities existing in an unspecified location designated as "key industrial centers." Events generated in these unspecified places by these unspecified people are not studied because Baltic shipyard workers have been abstractly characterized as "the proletariat" and have therefore vanished. Similarly, the location of the movement in Gdansk, having been merged with urban Poland's "key industrial centers," similarly disappears.

Here Polish Solidarity suffers the same fate as American Populism and Garton Ash joins Hofstadter. The similarity lays in the deployment of verbal displays as substitutes for serious inquiry, and a dazzling demonstration of the speed with which views from afar can summarily empty society of historical actors. To wit: (1) Hofstadter: "It is, of course, no more than a plausible guess what working farmers actually believed, as opposed to what politicians and other opinion makers told them."[15] (2) Garton Ash: "It is naturally difficult to separate the workers' own autonomous political learning process from the direct influence of KOR."[16] Far from serving as introductions to an analysis of the internal dynamics of the social movements the two authors discuss, these remarkable disclaimers rationalize why no such inquiry is undertaken and, instead, literary evidence is substituted for it. They illustrate a rigid cultural reality: though Hofstadter's view of Populism has collapsed, his basic cultural assumptions continue to inform social inquiry.

This circumstances explain why the term "populism" has little meaning as a description of popular politics. The distinction that is lost

14. Garton Ash, *op. cit.*
15. Hofstadter, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
16. Garton Ash, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

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concerns the profound difference between the political posture of a non-elite social group caught in the previously discussed "normal politics of a received culture" and the politics of the same people when they have succeeded in building a self-generated institution through which to assert their social aspirations. In a "normal" or passive state such groups are routinely described holistically as "the workers," "the farmers" or "the petit-bourgeoisie," and, as such, can be specifically characterized through static terms such as "provincial," "romantic," anarchic," "anti-Semitic," "utopian," i.e., "populist." So sanctioned is this intellectual habit that research aimed at unearthing evidential corroboration is considered unnecessary. Thus, on those rare occasions when self-generated social movements materialize, two things occur at the level of scholarship: not only are the animating dynamics of the movement missed, but the politicization of the passive and manipulated social formation into a self-conscious agency of democratization is also missed. In this manner, a pivotal site of democratic experience in history is passed over and the heritage is unwittingly weakened as a result.

Sophisticated as many of these traditions are, they are derived from and thus best suited for dealing with specific kinds of evidence readily available at the apex of society, i.e., "literary" evidence — the written evidence of, and concomitant interpretation of, social life as articulated by prior research and prior theory. Theoretical constructs, of course, are routinely stark — as simplified as old concepts turning on "the invisible hand of the market" or as complex as Jameson's exploration of "The Political Unconscious" through an analysis of "Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act."[17] Unless such theoretical efforts are articulated with great subtlety, as well as descriptive precision as to their social application (an area to which Jameson is less attentive), human beings risk being driven into holistic anonymity. Below the level of empowered elites or less empowered dissenting intellectuals capable of creating literary evidence, human agency is vulnerable to permanent disappearance.

The surviving literary product threatens to remain as the only evidence that anyone ever "acted" — even if such literary acts are a bit diminished by the fact that the arguments they marshall often emphasize the impossibility of autonomous acts. Thus, the relation of ideas to action can

17. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981). Jameson's work is singled out here not because his work is primitive but, on the contrary, because it is so subtle. The point is that this intellectual habit is widespread throughout Western culture and, as such, is one that transcends formal ideology.

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be dismissed: the heavy throbbings of the engines of "historical" forces become the only sounds heard. "Normality" becomes permanent. Even on those rare occasions when inherited cultural constraints are transcended and sustained popular activity materialize, such actions are routinely perceived only as elite-generated phenomena. This is how the privileging of literary evidence produces Hofstadterian preoccupations with "educated classes" and KOR's tenacious obsessions with its own literature.

All this points to a crucial lacuna in contemporary culture: the absence of a deep structure of democratic theory. This condition is so ubiquitously visible that it cannot be traced solely to the perseverance of complacent and condescending methodological habits. In-depth research of self-generated popular movements is time consuming and thus seems reasonable only if there is a likelihood of obtaining serious results. The thinness of contemporary democratic theory is in part a function of the political resignation that has come to characterize modern life. But it seems even more directly the product of a largely unseen cultural conclusion that transforms what we perceive to be the thin legacy of the past into a rationale for the acceptance of permanently low expectations for the future.

This wearied posture has a consoling function insofar as it helps resigned people maintain a minimum morale with the belief that it is sophisticated to have narrow hopes. The narrowness of this gaze, however, exacts a high price, as illustrated by the misreading of Polish Solidarity and American Populism: it minimizes democratic aspirations and prolonged experiments in autonomous activity by past generations. This habit so diminishes what is "reasonably" possible that it in turn serves to justify as "reasonable" patently absurd customs of governance and social relations. From the perspective of sanctioned authority, this result has a convivial ring to it. Yet, the dimunition of the heritage bears a bit more insidiously upon everyone else. Sustained long enough, the very standards of democratic measurement become codified at a low level. If the perception of thin achievement in the past serves to rationalize low standards in the present, the latter in turn facilitates a deferential but presumably well informed acceptance of prevailing forms of hierarchy, including mindless hierarchy, that coexist with democratic forms in Western culture. These reciprocal relations have the effect of encouraging as "urbane" despairing and often mean-spirited cultural forms, i.e., condescension toward specific popular social formations as well as toward popular democracy itself. The cumulative thrust of all these reinforcing cultural considerations is to provide a useful (though often

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unintended) rationale for the continuation of authoritarian conduct by all kinds of empowered elites. Over time, these customs inform, warp, and rigidify daily life in marriages, families, communities, schools, and workplaces, i.e., far beyond the range of high politics.

To focus, briefly, on the function of social experience in shaping intellectual processes that inform "political consciousness," means neither to engage in "anti-intellectual theorizing" or wandering into that imaginary romantic fantasy that used to be derisively characterized by old Leninists and Trotskyists as "workerism." A calm understanding of the roles of farmers in American Populism and workers in Polish Solidarity obviously enlarges the political, not to say egalitarian, significance of both historical moments. But the experiences of neither group presages some unalloyed utopia where something called "the people" rather effortlessly proves its political superiority over something called "the ruling elite." Upon close analysis, participants in populist movements, will presumably be found as well-equipped to make mistakes as everyone else.

The deeper issue here concerns the reigning intellectual traditions governing how human possibility is perceived. Sanctioned as they are on the Left as well as the Right, these traditions seem far too narrow to be associated with the idea of democracy. As guides to the discovery of the received dimensions of human striving, these traditions may be seen to fail too many tests to serve as useful instruments of inquiry into the heritage. Unless transcended, they stand as cultural artifacts attesting to the subtle thickness of hierarchical modes of thought. That so many *soi-disant* progressives have managed to find a home in such precincts helps measure the range of the crisis that now afflicts democratic thought.

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Liberalism and Civic Virtue

Christopher Lasch

The collapse of communism as a serious competitor to liberal capitalism has generated a state of euphoria among liberals of the Right and Center, qualified only by the reflection that the "end of history," in Francis Fukuyama's celebrated phrase, will be a "very sad time" for those who value "daring, courage, imagination, and idealism." The "unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism," as Fukuyama sees it, means the universal rule of law, the globalization of the "classless society" that has already been achieved in the US, a steady expansion of the supply of consumer goods, a "universal homogenous state," and a "post-historical consciousness" in which "ideological struggle . . . will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands."

Fukuyama's article recalls earlier predictions of the end of ideology by liberals. But it is curiously reminiscent, as well, of Marcuse's one-dimensional man and the Frankfurt school's horrifying vision of a totally administered society without contradictions and therefore completely resistant to change. Since Fukuyama, like Marcuse and his friends, takes his inspiration from Hegel, it is not surprising that their different versions of the end of history have so much in common. For that matter, the convergence of technological optimism with cultural despair, the worship of progress with nostalgia, has been a persistent current in modern thought since the Enlightenment. The triumph of reason looks like the promised land of harmony and freedom until we remind ourselves that men have learned to value freedom only in the course of competition and

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conflict. At that point, Max Weber's "iron cage" of rationality looks like a more accurate description of the future. Fukuyama, after dwelling at length on the beauties of liberalism and the feebleness of the forces now opposed to it, unexpectedly leaves us with the prospect of "centuries of boredom." The new order, he says, calls up the "most ambivalent feelings" — on the one hand, the satisfaction of knowing that liberalism no longer faces an ideological challenge of any importance; on the other, a "powerful nostalgia for a time when history existed."

But the liberal order is far from secure. In the hour of its seeming triumph, its fragility is exposed more clearly than ever before, nowhere more than in the US. Having defeated its totalitarian adversaries, liberalism is crumbling from within. The absence of an external threat makes it more difficult than before to ignore this decay. The Gulf War provided a momentary distraction, but it ended all too quickly; and although we can look forward to further distractions of this kind, it will be impossible, in the long run, to avoid the day of reckoning. Already the signs of impending breakdown are unmistakable. Drugs, crime, and gang wars are making our cities uninhabitable. Our school system is in a state of collapse. Our political parties are unable to enlist the masses of potential voters into the political process. The global circulation of commodities, information, and populations, far from making everyone affluent (as theorists of modernization used to predict so confidently), has widened the gap between rich and poor nations and generated a huge migration to the West and the US in particular, where the newcomers swell the vast army of the homeless, unemployed, illiterate, drug-ridden, derelict, and effectively disenfranchised. Their presence strains existing resources to the breaking point. Medical and educational facilities, law-enforcement agencies, and the available supply of goods — not to mention the supply of racial good will, never abundant to begin with — all appear inadequate to the enormous task of assimilating what is essentially a surplus population.

Even the children of privilege are no longer assimilated into the culture of liberalism. One survey after another shows that college students no longer command even a rudimentary knowledge of Western history, literature, or philosophy. A kind of deculturation has clearly been going on for some time, a process of unlearning without historical precedent (which explains why we do not have a better word to describe it). What E.D. Hirsch calls cultural illiteracy is probably a more serious danger than the more obviously ideological attacks on liberal culture. The Right repudiates "secular humanism," while the Left denounces any attempt to uphold a core of common values as cultural imperialism and demands

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equal time for minorities. The "modernization" of the world, as it was conceived when liberals were running the show, implied the creation not only of a global market but of a global culture in which liberal values — individual freedom, open inquiry, religious tolerance, human dignity — would be universally respected. We have a global culture, but it is the culture of Hollywood, rock & roll, and Madison Avenue — a culture of hedonism, cruelty, contempt, and cynicism.

It is pointless to speculate about what is to be done — whether we should seek to rescue liberalism, replace it with something else, or resign ourselves to the decline not just of liberalism but of our national experiment as a whole — until we get a better understanding of exactly what is happening to our political traditions and why. If liberalism retains the capacity for growth and development along new lines, it would be foolish to desert our dominant tradition. If, however, it has reached the outer limits of its growth, we should probably turn to submerged traditions in American life which have been overshadowed but never altogether extinguished by the reigning political creed.

To speak of any kind of limits at all is another way of speaking about the plight of liberalism, a political tradition predicated on unlimited economic expansion. In its most persuasive form, liberalism rests on a chastened belief in progress, one that does not presuppose any naive illusions about the perfectibility of human nature but assumes merely that a steady growth of consumer demand — a revolution of rising expectations — will sustain economic expansion indefinitely. Liberalism has identified itself with policies designed to assure full employment and thus to expand the capacity to consume. The promise of universal abundance has contained egalitarian implications without which it would have carried very little moral authority. Those implications, to be sure, were open to conflicting interpretations. Some people argued that it was enough to increase the general pool of goods and services, in the expectation that everyone's standard of living would rise as a result. Others demanded more radical measures designed not merely to increase the total wealth but to distribute it more equitably. But no one who believed in progress conceived of a limit on productive capacity as a whole. No one envisioned a return to a more frugal existence. Such views fell outside the progressive consensus.

The belated discovery that the earth's ecology will no longer sustain an indefinite expansion of productive forces deals the final blow to the belief in progress. A more equitable distribution of wealth requires a reduction in the standard of living enjoyed by the rich nations and the

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privileged classes. The attempt to extend Western standards of living to the rest of the world would lead very quickly to the exhaustion of nonrenewable resources, the irreversible pollution of the earth's atmosphere, drastic changes in its climate, and the destruction of the ecological system on which human life depends. "Let us imagine," Rudolf Bahro writes, "what it would mean if the raw material and energy consumption of our society were extended to the 4.5 billion people living today, or to the 10-15 billion there will probably be tomorrow. It is readily apparent that the planet can only support such volumes of production . . . for a short time to come." Let us imagine further an India in which every family owned a pair of cars and every house came with air-conditioning, stereos, VCRs, and a kitchen fully equipped with the latest appliances.

The growing importance of environmental issues provides the most dramatic but by no means the only indication that we have entered a new age of limits — limits not only to economic development but more generally to human control over nature and society. It is a commonplace observation that technological innovations have unforeseeable consequences that often render them self-defeating, compounding the very problems they were meant to solve. The widespread use of antibiotics leads to the proliferation of bacteria resistant to antibiotics. Medical technologies that prolong life create still another class of dependent, superfluous persons whose numbers overwhelm the facilities for taking care of them. Automobiles, supposedly a fast, cheap, and efficient means of transportation, merely disguise the cost of getting from one place to another. By taking account of the time required to maintain and pay for these machines, to drive and park them, and to earn the money to buy gas, insurance, and repairs, Ivan Illich once calculated that the average driver achieved an average speed of only 4.7 miles an hour — not much faster than he could walk. David Ehrenfeld, after citing many other examples of self-defeating technologies in his *Arrogance of Humanism*, argues that it is no longer possible to avoid the conclusion that our inability to make long-range predictions with any accuracy, to control the innumerable complexities that enter into such calculations, or to allow for unanticipated effects caused by our own procedures of diagnosis and measurement, impose severe limits on our capacity for control. In a recent article, not yet published, he continues his analysis of our "misplaced faith in control" by showing how over-management in the private as well as the public sector makes society increasingly unmanageable. The sheer volume of paperwork absorbs

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energies that might be used more constructively. Obsessive record-keeping makes it more and more difficult to distinguish useful from useless information or to locate appropriate information when it is needed. Obsessive supervision undermines the judgment, competence and self-confidence of those under supervision and creates a need for still more supervision. The cost of maintaining elaborate structures of management drains resources away from more productive investments. The administered society, it appears, is inherently unstable. There are limits beyond which it cannot operate without collapsing under its own weight — limits we are rapidly approaching.

In its classic version, liberalism reduced the functions of government to a bare minimum. Diplomacy, war, police, and education pretty much exhausted the responsibilities of the state, as it was conceived by liberals in the 18th and 19th centuries. This drastic simplification of government was an important source of liberalism's appeal, together with its promotion of religious tolerance and free speech. Yet the liberal state has now evolved into a leviathan, and even the misnamed private sector is dominated by huge bureaucracies exercising quasi-governmental powers and closely linked to the public bureaucracy, notwithstanding their impatience with regulation. What explains this curious line of historical development, as a result of which liberalism has come to be associated with a social order that would have seemed completely repellant to the founders of liberalism? Is it simply that liberals have betrayed their own heritage, as right-wing critics argue when they try to recall liberalism to its free-market origins? Or is there something in the very nature of liberalism — some inner contradiction, as we used to say — that gives rise to the need for elaborate structures of management, supervision, and control?

Through all the permutations and transformations of liberal ideology, two of its central features have persisted over the years — its commitment to progress and its belief that a liberal state could dispense with civic virtue. The commitment to progress alone generated many of the difficulties that now threaten to bury the liberal state, since progress meant large-scale production and the centralization of economic and political power. The belief in progress also contributed to the illusion that a society blessed with material abundance could dispense with the active participation of ordinary citizens in government, which brings us to the second point, the heart of the matter. In the aftermath of the American revolution, liberals began to argue, in opposition to the older view that "public virtue is the only foundation of republics,"

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in the words of John Adams, that a proper system of constitutional checks and balances would "make it advantageous even for bad men to act for the public good," as James Wilson put it. According to John Taylor, "an avaricious society can form a government able to defend itself against the avarice of its members" by enlisting "the interest of vice . . . on the side of virtue." Virtue lay in the "principles of government," Taylor argued, not in the "evanescent qualities of individuals." The institutions and "principles of a society may be virtuous, though the individuals composing it are vicious."

The trouble with this agreeable paradox of a virtuous society based on vicious individuals is that liberals did not really mean it. They took for granted a good deal more in the way of private virtue than they were willing to acknowledge. Even today, liberals who adhere to this minimal view of citizenship smuggle a certain amount of citizenship between the cracks of their free-market ideology. Milton Friedman admits that a liberal society requires a "minimum degree of literacy and knowledge," along with a "widespread acceptance of some common set of values." It is not clear that our society can meet even these minimal conditions, as things stand today; but it has always been clear that a liberal society needs more virtue than Friedman allows for. A system that relies so heavily on the concept of rights presupposes individuals who respect the rights of others, if only because they expect others to respect their own rights in return. The market, the central institution of a liberal society, presupposes at the very least sharp-eyed, calculating, and clear-headed individuals — paragons of rational choice; motivated not just by self-interest but enlightened self-interest. It was for this reason that 19th-century liberals attached so much importance to the family. The obligation to support a wife and children, in their view, would discipline possessive individualism and transform the potential gambler, speculator, dandy, or confidence man into a conscientious provider. Having abandoned the old republican ideal of citizenship along with the republican indictment of luxury, liberals lacked any grounds on which to appeal to individuals to subordinate private interest to the public good. But at least they could appeal to the higher selfishness of marriage and parenthood. They could ask, if not for the suspension of self-interest, for its elevation and refinement. Rising expectations would lead men and women to invest their ambitions in their offspring. The one appeal that could not be greeted with cynicism or indifference was the appeal summarized in the slogan of our own times: "our children: the future" — a slogan that makes its appearance only when its

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effectiveness can no longer be taken for granted. Without this appeal to the immediate future, the belief in progress could never have served as a unifying social myth, one that kept alive a lingering sense of social obligation and gave self-improvement, carefully distinguished from self-indulgence, the force of a moral imperative.

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, a prominent educator and humanitarian (a pioneer in education for the deaf, among other things) expressed a view widely shared by liberals when he wrote, in 1837, that the "good order and welfare of society" had to rest on "that indescribable parental attachment to offspring which secures to the child every particular, constant, and fond attention which its peculiar condition demands." Neither "legislative enactments" nor prisons nor a large police force could guarantee social order. Even the school, on which liberals characteristically put so much of the burden of social control and improvement, could not succeed unless it saw itself as "co-operating with the [family and] . . . greatly aiding its operations." Now that the family's educational role has been so greatly diminished, with the result that the schools expend most of their efforts in teaching things that should have been learned at home, we can appreciate the wisdom of these 19th-century platitudes about the dependence of the school on the family. Educators in the 20th century have tried to assure us that well-managed schools can replace the family, in effect. John Dewey's version of this new consensus was more modest than most. Since modern industry had "practically eliminated household and neighborhood occupations," he argued, the school would have to "supply that factor of training formerly taken care of in the home" — training, that is, in the "physical realities of life." Abraham Flexner and Frank Bachman went much further. "Social, political and industrial changes," they wrote in 1918, "have forced upon the school responsibilities formerly laid upon the home. Once the school had mainly to teach the elements of knowledge, now it is charged with the physical, mental, and social training of the child as well." In our own day, it is charged, in addition to all that, with the still more sweeping task of instilling a sense of racial and ethnic pride in disenfranchised minorities, at the expense of the basic education that is really needed. Yet it is increasingly acknowledged, even by educators, that the schools cannot teach anything at all unless the importance of learning is upheld in the home. Without a substructure of strong families to build on, the school system will continue to deteriorate.

The history of education provides an especially striking illustration of a

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general principle, namely that the replacement of informal types of association by formal systems of socialization and control weakens social trust, undermines the willingness both to assume responsibility for oneself and to hold others accountable for their actions, destroys respect for authority, and thus turns out to be self-defeating. The informal associations that have been allowed to wither (except when they have been deliberately and systematically destroyed by ill-conceived adventures in social engineering) include not only the family but the neighborhood, which serves much more effectively than the school as an intermediary between the family and the larger world. Jane Jacobs speaks of the "normal, casual manpower for child rearing" that is wasted when city planners and other well-meaning reformers seek to get children off the streets into parks, playgrounds, and schools where they can be professionally supervised. The whole thrust of liberal policy, ever since the first crusades against child labor, has been to transfer the care of children from informal settings to institutions designed specifically for that purpose. Today this trend continues in the movement for day care, often justified on the grounds not merely that working mothers need it but that day care centers can take advantage of the latest innovations in pedagogy and child psychology. This policy of segregating children in age-graded institutions under professional supervision has been a massive failure, for reasons suggested by Jacobs in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* — an attack on city planning that applies to social engineering in general. "The myth that playgrounds and grass and hired guards or supervisors are innately wholesome for children and that city streets, filled with ordinary people, are innately evil for children, boils down to a deep contempt for ordinary people." In their contempt, planners lose sight of the way in which city streets, if they are working the way they should, teach children a lesson that cannot be taught by educators or professional caretakers — that "people must take a modicum of public responsibility for each other even if they have no ties to each other." When the corner grocer or the locksmith scolds a child for running into the street, the child learns something that cannot be learned simply by telling him about it. What the child learns is that adults unrelated to each other except by the accident of propinquity uphold certain standards and assume responsibility for the neighorhood. With good reason, Jacobs calls this the "first fundamental of successful city life" — one that "people hired to look after children cannot teach because the essence of this responsibility is that you do it without being hired."

Neighborhoods encourage "casual public trust," according to Jacobs.

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In its absence, the city has to rely on formal agencies of law-enforcement. In Los Angeles, a city that has turned its back on the street, we see this pattern in its most highly developed form — the "militarization of city life," as Mike Davis calls it in his *City of Quartz*. A vastly expanded police force, equipped with the technology and increasingly with the mentality of a police state, still finds itself unable to assure safety and order and has to be supplemented by an army of private policemen. According to Davis, the private sector specializes in labor-intensive law-enforcement, the public sector in aerial surveillance, paramilitary operations, wiretapping, and the maintenance of its elaborate criminal files. "Fortress L.A.," as Davis calls it, is becoming a city of "enclosed communities," heavily guarded compounds prepared to repel intruders at the slightest hint of trouble."

Los Angeles, the triumph of counter-urbanization, embodies the triumph of liberalism, together with its collapse. It is literally the end of the road, simultaneously the last refuge of the liberal dream and the nightmare that was always implicit in the dream. Liberalism promised progress, abundance, and above all privacy. The freedom to live as you please, think and worship as you please — this privatization of the good life was liberalism's greatest appeal. Having set definite limits to the powers of the state, at the same time relieving individuals of most of their civic obligations, liberals assumed that they had cleared away the outstanding obstacles to the pursuit of happiness. What they allowed themselves to forget was that public order is not just a function of the state, which can safely be entrusted with the responsibility for education and law-enforcement while citizens go about their private affairs. A society in working order has to be largely self-policing and to a considerable extent self-schooling as well. City streets, as Jacobs reminds us, keep the peace and instruct the young in the principles of civic life. Neighborhoods recreate many features of the village life celebrated in American folklore, even as Americans reject the promiscuous sociability of the village in favor of "life-style enclaves," as Robert Bellah calls them, in which they can associate exclusively with those who share their own tastes and outlook. Neighborhoods provide the informal substructure of social order, in the absence of which the everyday maintenance of life has to be turned over to professional bureaucrats. In Los Angeles, a city deliberately designed to maximize privacy, we see how this hyperextension of the organizational sector is the necessary consequence of the retreat from the neighborhood. But Los Angeles is exceptional only in its single-minded dedication to a deeply anti-social version of the American

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dream and in the scale of the social problems that result. The same pattern can be seen in every other American city, where the police, the educational bureaucracy, and the health and welfare bureaucracies fight a losing battle against crime, disease, and ignorance.

The crisis of public funding is the clearest indication of the weakness of a state that can no longer count on informal, everyday mechanisms of social trust and control. The taxpayers' revolt, although itself informed by an ideology of privatism resistant to any kind of civic appeals, also grows out of a well-founded suspicion that tax money merely sustains bureaucratic self-aggrandizement. The state is obviously overburdened, and nobody has much confidence in its ability to solve the problems that need to be solved. Of course, disenchantment with the welfare state does not in itself imply commitment to some other kind of solutions. It may well signify nothing more than indifference, cynicism, or resignation. Although almost everybody now believes that something has gone radically wrong with our country, no one has any clear ideas about how to fix it. The increasingly harsh, intemperate quality of public debate no doubt reflects this shortage of ideas and the frustration to which it gives rise.

As formal organizations break down, people will have to improvise ways of meeting their immediate needs: patrolling their own neighborhoods, withdrawing their children from public schools to educate them at home. The default of the state will thus contribute in its own right to the restoration of informal mechanisms of self-help. But it is hard to see how the foundations of civic life can be restored unless this work becomes an overriding goal of public policy. We have heard a good deal of talk about the repair of our material infrastructure, but our cultural infrastructure, as we might call it, needs attention too, and more than just the rhetorical attention of politicians who praise "family values" while pursuing economic policies that undermine them. It is either naive or cynical to lead the public to think that dismantling the welfare state is enough to insure a revival of informal cooperation — "a thousand points of light." People who have lost the habit of self-help, who live in cities and suburbs where shopping malls have replaced neighborhoods, and who prefer the company of close friends (or simply the company of television) to the informal sociability of the street, the coffee shop, and the tavern are not likely to reinvent communities just because the state has proved such an unsatisfactory substitute. They still need help from the state, in the form of policies designed to strengthen the family, say, and to enable families to exert more control

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over professionals when they have to depend on them or at least to give families more freedom in the choice of professionals. A voucher system for schools is the type of reform that answers this need, and the same principle might be applied to other professional services as well.

The populist tradition in American politics furnishes us with a good example of a reform, the so-called subtreasury system proposed by farmers in the 1880s and 1890s, designed to use the resources of the state to promote collective self-help instead of replacing it with professional help. The populists had more than a rhetorical commitment to the family farm. Hard times had taught them, however, that family farms could survive only if farmers achieved control over buying and selling through cooperation, and when the banks refused to finance cooperatives (preferring instead to drive them out of business), farmers turned to the federal government. Since their subtreasury plan, intended to extend federal credit to farmers' cooperatives, required a considerable expansion of the state's powers, together with a corresponding reduction of the powers of private bankers, the populists have often been seen as early exponents of the welfare state. What they were proposing, however, can better be understood as an alternative to the welfare state. They were asking the state to protect the integrity of communities exposed to the withering effects of the market. In retrospect, we can see that if the state had invested in communities, the welfare system would have been unnecessary. Unfortunately, those who controlled the state made the crucial decision to invest in "progress" instead, and all of us are now paying the price — even the affluent holed up in their fortified enclaves.

Populism speaks more directly to current pathologies than other political traditions, not just because it shows how the resources of the state can be used to promote non-bureaucratic solutions but because it stands for things most Americans still believe in and are willing to defend. At a time when other ideologies are greeted with apathy, populism has the capacity to generate real enthusiasm. The New Right owes its success, in considerable part, to its ability to claim the populist heritage as its own. Formerly Democratic voters are attracted to the New Right, and might be attracted to a more vigorous and genuinely egalitarian form of populism, because it offers the most penetrating critique of our political deformities. It upholds the importance of personal accountability both against the irresponsibility institutionalized in bureaucracy, where no one can be held accountable for anything, and against the cult of the victim and the politics of entitlement and affirmative action.

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Claimant groups aggressively displaying their wounds, begging for handouts, and blaming all their troubles on a system of organized oppression are the natural counterpart of the bureaucrats who selectively dispense governmental largesse. These seemingly contending forces, the principal actors in our political soap opera, depend on each other, and their symbiotic relationship is solidified by a humanitarian ideology that recoils in horror at the thought of "blaming the victim." Liberal ideology in its current version — the ideology of multiculturalism and "compassion" — simultaneously serves the needs of groups demanding care and of the caretakers themselves. It sounds radical, even revolutionary, yet leads only to the creation of new bureaucracies and the elaboration of existing ones. It is highly conducive to a type of moral indignation that nevertheless absolves everyone of accountability and blame, since injustice can always be traced to an impersonal source — "institutional racism" or some other systemic offense. By contrast, the populist tradition is highly skeptical of a politics based on moral indignation and self-righteousness. Not that the lower middle classes typically attracted to populist movements are exempt from the temptations of envy and resentment. If anything, they are more likely to indulge these passions than other classes; and it is for this very reason that a "spiritual discipline against resentment," in Reinhold Niebuhr's phrase, has been such a prominent feature of populist movements at their best.

It would be foolish to deny the characteristic features of populist movements at their worst — racism, anti-Semitism, nativism, anti-intellectualism, and all the other evils so often cited by liberal critics. But it would be equally foolish to deny what is indispensable in this tradition — its appreciation of the moral value of honest work, its respect for competence, its egalitarian opposition to entrenched privilege, its refusal to be impressed by the jargon of experts, its insistence on plain speech and on holding people accountable for their actions. Populism offers no panacea for the ills that afflict the modern world, and in its specifically agrarian form it is no doubt outdated. But any movement that offers any real hope for the future will have to find much of its moral inspiration in the plebeian radicalism of the past and more generally in the indictment of progress, large-scale production, and bureaucracy that was drawn up by a long line of moralists whose perceptions were shaped by the producers' view of the world.

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Community and Ecology

Tim Luke

Community, Class and Modernity

The populist critique of the New Class and its liberal agenda usually takes one of two lines of attack. The first, like MacIntyre's, "holds that liberal political theory accurately represents liberal social practice."[1] For populists to criticize liberal society, it is sufficient to take liberal theory on its own terms and accept the vision of subjectivity advocated by Locke, Smith or Bentham as true. That is, contemporary society is an aggregation of rational economic agents, existentially fragmented in an endless game of complex instrumental calculations. But, as Lasch points out, ordinary people do not want to live this way — a lifestyle they associate with New Class behavior.[2] Within that framework, there are no moral criteria to guide individual choice, except personal utility or the unstable interests of loosely aggregated voluntary associations. The inevitable result is a series of crises.

The second response, such as Bellah's "holds that liberal theory radically misrepresents real life."[3] In this view, most people live in a world of complex social ties lying beyond the scope of liberal theory. Atomized economic agents, set free to act instrumentally, will follow New Class ideals of upward social mobility and leave local communities.[4]

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1. See Michael Walzer, "The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism," in *Political Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (February, 1990), p. 7. See also Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).
2. See Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York: Norton, 1991), pp. 476-508.
3. Walzer, "Communitarian Critique," *op. cit.*, p. 9. Also see Robert Bellah *et al.*, *Habits of the Heart* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
4. Lasch, *True Heaven*, *op. cit.*, pp. 509-32.

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Therefore, to criticize modern society, all one has to do is reject liberal theory on its own false terms, while attending to its surviving preliberal, nonliberal or postliberal attributes that make it work, since they are the only possible basis for building a viable social order.[5] Both these critiques contain an element of truth, but they do not go far enough. Any political discussion of community today must confront the fundamental question of ecology.[6]

Today, however, any evocation of "community" and "ecology" immediately comes under attack as a reactionary response to modernity and is associated with conservative images of "going back to nature" — a rejection of modernity's unilinear and irreversible character. Despite what sociological theory assumes, however, modernity is neither unilinear nor irreversible, going from primitive community to complex society. It is the result of critical choices made within particular historical conditions.[7] Earlier projects seeking alternative social arrangements providing for broader community autonomy can be reactivated to challenge increasing New Class domination. By interposing between production and consumption technical expertise and complex hierarchical organization centered in massive state bureaucracies and transnational corporations, the New Class systematically disempowers all other social agents. In substituting non-renewable energy-intensive production techniques for organic, labor-intensive ones, it has severed what were once close ties of communities to their particular ecological settings. The ecological destruction wrought around the globe indicates how costly these economic and political trade-offs have become.

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5. Cf. Gérard Raulet, "The New Utopia: Communication Technologies," in *Telos* 87 (Spring 1991), pp. 39-58.

6. Lasch vindicates populism as an alternative, but he ignores the American political traditions that have best approximated his ideal, i.e., those of ecological activism.

7. For a critique of this modernization model of progress, see Timothy W. Luke, *Social Theory and Modernity: Dissent, Critique and Revolution* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990), pp. 211-68. The most recent sociological analysis predicated on such modernization dynamics is to be found in Habermas. However, his framework of "system" and "lifeworld," which casts the system as an integrative force colonizing the lifeworld, represents system as society and lifeworld as community in essentially the same old unidirectional, irreversible and inexorable roles of modernization theory, even though the epicyclical construct of "civil society" can be interposed by between the two to make communication theory look like it mediates a serious struggle between system and lifeworld forces. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. II, *Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, trans. by Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987).

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The New Class

New Class ideological agitprop constantly celebrates the unlimited abundance that hi-tech industry and scientific research will make possible.[8] These promises of universal abundance and a more egalitarian distribution of its many benefits have not and cannot be kept.[8] It is physically impossible to produce enough wealth to bring everyone up to New Class "throw-away" standards of living, because the earth's already severely strained ecosystems simply cannot carry this load.

Generally speaking, the New Class designates the professional-technical intelligentsia or the knowledge-manipulating social strata which articulate and apply their expertise in both state bureaucracies and corporate enterprises.[9] Internally divided, the ranks of this New Class encompass both the adversary culture and the technical elites, liberal reformers and conservative technocrats, bureaucratic *apparatchiks* and cybernetic entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, their collective commitment to knowledge-driven projects of technological development and economic growth embroils them in elaborate schemes that disempower ordinary people and reduces nature to an alien entity that needs to be dominated. These attitudes lead to the destruction of nature and mystify the actual brutality and irresponsibility of New Class power by associating it with the plethora of material goods, cultural benefits, and social services that the presently unsustainable rates of exploiting nature now provides only for the few. These self-destructive dynamics need to be reexamined against a backdrop of concrete alternatives.

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8. This public relations blitz is the utopian literature of the present. For example, Rockwell International shows the technical breakthroughs that can be realized "Where Science Gets Down to Business." DuPont's timeless call to achieve "Better Living through Chemistry" is matched by today's General Electric pledging to "Bring Good Things to Light." AT&T empowers one "To Reach Out and Touch Someone," because "the System is the Solution" if you only make "The Right Choice." Toyota/Lexus promises "The Relentless Pursuit of Perfection," but Chevron unifies expert scientific producer and everyday energy consumer in its Zen-like "People Do." However, the tao of Dow Chemical perhaps surpasses them all as its corporate imagery shows soon-to-graduate, professional-technical students instructing their families, which are diversely shown as black ghetto-dwellers, comfortable white suburbans or hard-working farm folks, on how a New Class-based higher education will pay off technologically for them and humanity, while an unseen chorus of happy consumers jubilantly sings the musical score, "You Can Make a Difference in What Tomorrow Brings, Dow Lets You Do Great Things!"

9. In the US, inequality has grown since 1967 and has been increasing at a faster pace. See Kevin Phillips, *The Politics of Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath* (New York: Random House, 1990), pp. 3-32; and Robert Reich, *The Work of Nations: Preparing America for the 21st Century* (New York: Times Books, 1991).

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Community and Populism

Within this New Class framework, community tends to decay into the most "minimal" features with very little popular content. Composed of clients and consumers, communities today are not much more than an aggregation of atomized individuals organized into discrete geographic-legal units. Community becomes so thin because workplace and residence, production and consumption, identity and interests, administration and allocation are so divided in the New Class project of an advanced industrial society predicated primarily on geographic and social mobility. This division of interests, loss of common historical consciousness, weakening of shared beliefs, and lessening of ecological responsibility is what necessitates alternative approaches to understanding community.

Social theory, New Class ideology *par excellence*, interprets communities entirely in terms of modernization. Allegedly, with the spread of national and international networks of capitalist exchange, the close ties of organic local community (*Gemeinschaft*) crumbled into rubble as formalized social relations (*Gesellschaft*) buried it under the better organized and rational practices of modernity.[10] According to this logic, "community" is depicted as the warm, close, past-and-present social condition within an oversimplified conceptual dichotomy which opposes it to the cold, distant, present-and-future social condition of "society."[11] Thus sociological analyses have interpreted community and its "premodern" institutions as a primitivism to be eliminated by the rational progress made possible by modernity's state bureaucracies and global markets. The alleged stasis of premodern communities provides a legitimating writ for imposing more fluid, mobile, and variable forms of everyday life, such as those manufactured by New Class experts.

Once community is framed in these categories, its meaning becomes even more problematic because New Class assumptions guard against "thicker" populist understandings. Social theory deals with alternative visions of community in three equally distorted ways. First, it interprets

10. The original and problematic source in modern sociological theory for these notions is Ferdinand Toennies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig: Reisland, 1987).

11. Although Rousseau, Smith, and Marx make similar arguments about modernization, these ideas gain their fullest professional-technical articulation only in modern social theory. See Henry Maine, *Ancient Law* (London: Murray, 1861); Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: MacMillan, 1933); Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, ed. by Talcott Parsons (New York: Free Press, 1947); Charles Horton Cooley, *Social Organization* (New York: Scribner, 1909); Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1936); and Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1952).

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any emphasis on community as *conservatism*, or an effort by privileged interests to defend traditional practices. This approach, however, undermines New Class accounts of the irreversibility of the evolution from community to society embedded in modern social theory. It implicitly acknowledges that some community-tradition-folk practices do survive and coexist with society-modernity-secular practices. It stigmatizes concerns for surviving traditions as "conservative," because accepting traditional continuities implies an endorsement of organic hierarchies rooted in age-old prejudices, inequality, and oppression. As the architect and guardian of modern thin communities, the New Class takes great pains to argue that attempts to reconstitute traditional thick communities *necessarily* lead to perpetuating premodern evils.

The second New Class criticism of community casts concerns with its "thick" reconstitution as *romanticism* or a wish to return to long-lost but not forgotten sets of primitive relations. This reaction also undercuts the vision of community inexorably evolving into society by acknowledging the moral emptiness of modern society and admitting that the closeness of traditional community returns as an unfulfilled utopian image. The New Class sanctions any engagement with notions such as "voluntary simplicity" or "small is beautiful" as nostalgia. Rather than embracing the unsettling uncertainty of market exchange, this romanticism would turn back the clock to recapture communal solidarity. Yet the New Class also argues that such forms of communal life never really existed and, even if they did, it would be impossible and undesirable to revitalize them. The teleological role of an idealized past to help shape new projects of social reconstruction thus flatten out within the New Class dogma of "the end of history," reducing all future developments to the mere extension of instrumental rationality and ever-growing consumption.

The third approach sees longing for 'thick" communities as *collectivism*, or an impatience with the divisions, instability and mobility of capitalist society. The New Class has closely policed these aspirations for maximal community because collectivist alternatives are but another form of New Class domination — as can be seen from recent East European experiences, within which the very concept of the New Class originally arose. Radical visions of a future condition of rational collectivist control threaten more modest advances in the present. Instead of dealing with present problems of minimal community on their own terms, such radical collectivism would rush the clock forward into some technologically-defined maximal communitarianism constituting a perfect rational utopia.

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The New Class may eventually gain these powers, but prematurely calling for their realization only exposes the fragility of power and sparks fears of the despotic collectivist nightmares of "really existing socialism."

Talking about communal life, then, is hazardous. None of these dangers in maximal populist community are necessarily guaranteed to occur, but New Class ideology continues to issue its iron-clad warranties. Unless one accepts the thinnest, most minimal constructions of society, New Class interests feel threatened. Any program to reconstruct today's thin/minimal communities as new forms of thicker/maximal community draws stern disciplinary indictments. Because of their allegedly *conservative*, *romantic* or *collectivist* aspirations, populist projects continue to be hassled by New Class "concept cops" eager to defend against ordinary people seeking to shape their lives and determine their destinies.

"Environmentalism" As New Class Ideology

In the US today, calling for greater ecological responsibility has become politically imperative. While environmental concerns are still associated with an all but vanished counterculture, many New Class insiders have "gone green" by integrating ecological concerns within bureaucratic corporate agendas. Thus the World Bank endorses "environmentalist" economic growth, transnational corporations claim that everyday is "Earth Day," and large government bureaucracies manage their office waste by buying "100% recycled paper" file folders. Behind such mediagenic window-dressing, however, lurk new projects of "environmental defense," "waste containment," or "worldwatching" to legitimate expanding New Class interventionist power and knowledge.

Ecological problems are global, borderless, and transnational. As the Cold War has faded, so has the concrete threat of communist subversion which once justified state as well as corporate projects of modernization. Yet the global economy and the interventionist state constructed as anti-communist bulwarks remain, grow and continue to ravage the environment. These New Class "worldwatchers" today "think globally," but "act locally" to shore up their power by defending the environment, containing waste, and watching the world in ways that insure their clients will remain passive, dependent and powerless.

"Global thinking" has become the ideology of growth-minded nation-states and transnational corporations. It demands uncritical acceptance of formal codes of instrumental rationality able to deal with elaborate statistical models assumed to be identical to and exhaustive of the forms of life captured within their disciplinary grids. It is reductionist,

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instrumental, and destructive. Everything not disclosed by its professional rules of statistical standard deviation or mathematical multiple regression is crushed, ignored or distorted to fit standardized uniform results on the projected slopes of statistical extrapolations.

The New Class empowers itself and disempowers local communities all over the globe through a simple bargain. In exchange for accepting their systems of knowledge and power, the New Class promises that the short-term flow of goods and services on a global scale will continue and grow for a few more decades — even if only for the benefit of various elites. To resist this project, the flow of goods and services may slow or stop, which could lead to major social and economic crises. The New Class is clearly transnational and highly homogenized. The elite professional spaces delimited within telecommunication links, jetports, hi-tech office complexes, upper-income neighborhoods, new science centers and powerful bureaucratic agencies all tend to reproduce the same sets of expectations. "Acting locally" while "thinking globally" means surfing in Maui and thinking about the next business deal in Manila, working at home but commuting cybernetically to the bond business pits in Tokyo, or contributing to the local PBS television station to pay its share of producing a documentary in London about saving elephants in Africa.

Beyond the New Class' environmentalist rhetoric, these increasingly borderless minimal "communities" remain ensnared in global exchange networks, living off millennia of slowly accumulated fossil fuels. Their major concern is with maximizing mobility rather than ensuring sustainability. Often none of their vital ecological support mechanisms are in the immediate environmental vicinity. Environmental inputs are not used on a sustainable scale appropriate to each bioregional setting. Instead, these supporting flows are sourced from around the larger nation-state or even the world, bound together by the wasteful expenditure of scarce non-renewable energy. Due to their location in the global network, some neighborhoods, cities, regions, and nation-states either enjoy exceptionally high rates of excess consumption or suffer from outrageously inadequate levels of basic goods and services.

The New Class is, first and foremost, grounded in transnational exchange and not embedded in a particular ecoregional setting. Being constantly on the move, it treats most places frivolously or disrespectfully. Any place is usually no better than any other. Indeed, every place is equally subject to potential destruction as a development site, economic raw material or fresh market to sustain the flow. Building a community in a particular location, accepting it on its own ecological terms, working

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to adapt a sustainable way of life, cherishing it for its unique differences are foreign notions to the New Class' operational logic. By "outsourcing" the material basis of everyday life or organizing production around importing incomplete segments or partial components of the total array of goods and services needed to survive, New Class state and corporate planners have broken many communal and organic ties to immediate ecoregional settings. By channeling communities toward "specializing" or exporting their small, limited stream of goods and services in sufficient volume to maintain a balance of trade with other communities in a global exchange network, New Class experts make them hostage to state and corporate bureaucracies. Profitable in an exchange-based accounting system drawn up for quarterly reports to New Class management, these cycles of global trade are ultimately unsustainable.

Resisting these New Class practices must take the form of acting and thinking ecologically. Unless and until most communities reconnect their economies with their immediate supporting ecoregions, they will be subject both to New Class domination and environmental collapse. Living in balance with the local bioregional surroundings while still tied to larger networks of information and expertise, communities can turn into sustainable commonwealths instead of predatory profiteers. More importantly, new kinds of knowledge, tied to the specificities of place and the particularities of local communities, would develop in creating a sustainable society. Such knowledge is not likely to suit the expectations of today's typical New Class expert. But it could develop openly once people and communities embed themselves ecologically in the immediate region. Knowledge of place should attend to the particularities of that ecoregion by suspending universal standards in favor of what is suitable to each community. Otherwise, inappropriate cultural codes, housing forms, dietary patterns, apparel styles, technical implements or energy systems unsuited to particular environments will give way to foreign disciplines of technological domination. These changes require demystification of New Class power and the reconstitution of communal concerns with local and regional commonwealths, because the limits of environmental sustainability have already been reached and in some settings are being exceeded.

Possibilities for Populist Resistance

The New Class myth of economic progress is becoming increasingly indefensible: the high standards of living it promises are not standard, have never been very high for most people, and do not guarantee a

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meaningful life. Communities may do better by determining their own ecologically-appropriate ethos, redefining their own standards of life, and setting their own moral criteria. New Class ideology calls for communities and individuals to "think globally, act locally" to prop up the tottering political economy of advanced industrial society. An ecological populism needs communities and individuals which can "think locally" and "act globally."

For an ecological populism, nature must be brought back directly into everyday life in more subjective aesthetic or ethical forms. Rather than being only an alien entity from which to extract resources and into which to dump waste, nature must be treated as an equal vital presence. It should not remain the object of administration by New Class experts, but the most basic subjective site defining essential ends and basic values, such as responsibility, frugality, autonomy, sustainability and freedom. These ecological and populist notions of community must not be mistaken for utopian socialism or other long-discredited models promising organic reconciliation with nature. Returning to some idyllic past is neither likely nor necessary. An ecological populism would develop an alternative modernity by making different choices about community or forcing new popular relations of production.[12] An ecological populism must go well beyond bankrupt ecosocialist millenarianism.[13]

"Thinking locally" and "acting globally" means making several radical shifts towards some social forms conventionally regarded as "dead

12. An ecological society should be an alternative modernity, not an antimodernity or post-modernity. See Murray Bookchin, *Toward an Ecological Society* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980); and Timothy W. Luke, "Notes for a Deconstructionist Ecology," in *New Political Science* 11 (Spring 1983), pp. 21-32.

13. For outlines of these ecosocialist programs, see Martin Ryle, *Ecology and Socialism* (London: Radius, 1988); and Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques, eds., *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1989). An effective ecological populism must ask different questions to create an economy, society and polity beyond the romantic collectivism of such ecosocialist rhetorics. Today's ecosocialist programs read like agendas of re-empowerment for some kind of centralized statist collectivism, which looks to Maoist peasant work brigades or Cuban state farms for models of "a kinder, gentler socialism" serving green goals. Yet the collective mode of land holding, work organization and technological control of these models threatens a disappointing rerun of bureaucratic *nomenklatura* and *apparat* authoritarianism. The allure of appropriate technologies in ecosocialism also evokes new ill-considered infatuations. When viewed through the soft focus and warm glow of *Mother Earth News* or *The Whole Planet Earth Catalogue*, ecosocialism bizarrely parodies Lenin's declaration that "socialism equals electrification plus soviet power" with claims that "ecosocialism equals windmills, geodesic domes, and solar panels plus nonhierarchical decision-making." The technological enthusiasms of such "back to the land, here comes the sun" manifestos promise to exhaust their force in economic fragmentation, cultural frustration and political failure.

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and gone." First, would be the creation of more complex, diverse, and skilled societies of small producers, owning real property and controlling a significant body of skills. Owning and controlling such assets at the local level tends to reunify production and consumption in the same population centers. This means changing who owns and controls as well as who uses and profits from land, capital and technology. Not only the benefits of consumption, but also the costs of production would then be immediately evident at the local level rather than only in distant environmental "sacrifice zones." A complex society of small-scale proprietors and regional producers, in turn, could nest their economies more ecologically in the particular sustainable ecoregion.[14]

Second, such a society would cultivate a new subjectivity grounded in new kinds of empowerment — technological, economic, political, and cultural. Since "the good life" would no longer be the endless consumption obsession of contemporary permissive individualism, it could be redefined in more demanding moral codes of hard work, frugality, ecological responsibility, humility, and skill perfection.[15] This, in turn, will generate new community institutions suited to the new context.[16] Here the real advances of secular rational civilization might counterbalance potential regressions to a reactionary irrational culture. Racism, provincialism, xenophobia, sexism, and class hatreds need not be part of any populist society. Indeed, loyalty to community, ecoregion or place need not become lines of cultural conflict or group warfare.

Third, within such a context, centralized bureaucratic state control and standardized corporate penetration of local communities would be considerably curtailed, while individual responsibility would be greatly increased. Yet self-rule, self-ownership, and self-management are demanding social practices. Freedom entails the prospect of failures, reversals, and just having less at times without being automatically able to turn to centralized state powers for relief. While they are very likely to succeed at making a popular ecological community work, these

14. As Wendell Berry notes, some cities will never be sustainable, "New York City cannot be made sustainable, nor can Phoenix" (p. 63), but many others can and should be. See "Out of Your Car, Off Your Horse," in *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 267, No. 2 (February, 1991), 60-63. Also see David Morris, *Self-Reliant Cities: Energy and the Transformation of Urban America* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1982); Richard Register, *Ecocity Berkeley: Building Cities for a Healthy Future* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1987); Wendell Berry, *Meeting the Expectations of the Land: Essays in Sustainable Agriculture and Stewardship* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984); and Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1977).

15. See an initial consideration of these goals in Ken Anderson *et al.*, "Roundtable on Communitarianism," in *Telos* 76 (Summer 1988), pp. 2-32.

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communities may also collapse. This threat of failure makes their autonomy meaningful: if New Class big brothers are always standing in the background ready to pick them up, dust them off, and push them along their way, then there is little meaningful autonomy or real freedom for such populist commonwealths. The transnational character of the diminished but still very much functioning global economy with its time-and-space compressing communication and transportation systems will prevent most communities from withdrawing into isolationist self-sufficiency or collapsing after unforeseen natural disaster.

Finally, these shifts would involve reconstituting the fundamental writs of authority now underpinning public order. Propounding larger aggregates of these autonomous communities in the US would require real federal structures to protect and preserve such ecological commonwealths from outside interference and internal insecurity. A new debate about federalism must center on local autonomy without revitalizing traditional practices of racism or sexism, preservation of national and transnational ties without aggravating liberal practices of unrepresented rationalization, arbitrary decision-making and bureaucratic collective organization overriding popular consent.[17] By elaborating such unrealized possibilities, an ecological populism could shake many communities' traditional resistance to change as well as mount a political offensive against New Class domination.

16. For more discussion, see Paul and Percival Goodman, *Communities: Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life* (New York: Random House, 1960).

17. For some preliminary considerations, see Murray Bookchin, *The Rise of Urbanization and the Decline of Citizenship* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1987).

U.S. Postal Service. Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation. 1. A. Title of publication: Telos. B. Publication no. 10770. 2. Date of filing: September 30, 1991. 3. Frequency of issue: quarterly. A. No. of issues published annually: 4. B. Annual subscription price: $70.00. 4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 431 East 12th Street, New York, NY 10009. 5. Complete mailing of the headquarters or general business offices of the publishers: same. 6. Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor and managing editor: Publisher, Paul Piccone, 431 E. 12th Street, NY 10009. Editor, Paul Piccone, 431 E. 12th Street, New York, NY 10009. Managing Editor, Kerry Milliron, 431 East 12th Street, New York, NY 10009. 7. Owner: Paul Piccone, 431 East 12th Street, New York, NY 10009. 8. Known Bondholders: none. 10. Extent and nature of circulation: first number in each category is average number of copies each issue during the preceding 12 months; second number is the actual number of copies of the single issue published nearest to filing date. A. Total no. copies: 3000, 3000. B. Paid circulation. 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 820, 710. 2. Mail subscriptions: 1200, 1190. C. Total paid circulation: 2020, 1900. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means; samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 40, 44. E. Total distribution (sum of C and D): 2060, 1944. F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 940, 1056. 2. Return from news agents: none, none. G. Total (sum of E, F1 and F2): 3000, 3000. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. (signed) Paul Piccone, publisher.

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Myth of the Totally Administered Society

Robert D'Amico

An often cited but unquestioned claim of contemporary political theory is that the "totalitarian state" is a unique and *sui generis* social formation in the 20th century. Both the Left and Right have embraced this concept as the common core of political theory and policy after WWII.[1] The *locus classicus* of these ideas is probably Karl Popper's claim that "civilization has not fully recovered from the shock of its birth — the transition from the tribal or 'closed society,' with its submission to magical forces, to the 'open society' which sets free the critical powers of man. . . . [Thus] the shock of this transition is one of the factors that has made possible the rise of those reactionary movements which have tried, and

1. For example, compare the following quotes. First, the conservative columnist George Will, who argues that states ought to be concerned with the "the citizen's soul," is quick to distinguish what he calls "soulcraft" from "totalitarianism." "[W]hen man is defined not in terms of his nature but in terms of history. . . . What comes is totalitarianism which aims to reconstitute man, to reduce him to raw material for history's processes and purposes. . . . It is the result of doing what Marx did when he defined man in terms of man's experience rather than his essence." George F. Will, *Statecraft as Soulcraft* (NewYork: Simon and Shuster, 1983), p. 146. Second, the anarchist leftist Noam Chomsky, who characteristically argues in New Left style that: "within the nation-state, the effective 'national purpose' will be articulated, by and large, by those who control the central economic institutions, while the rhetoric to disguise it is the province of the intelligentsia. . . . In such pronouncements we see very clearly the contribution of the technocratic and policy-oriented intellectual to what we properly call 'thought control' in the totalitarian states, where obedience is secured by force rather than by density of impact. Ours is surely a more effective system, one that would be used by dictators if they were smarter. It combines highly effective indoctrination with the impression that the society is really 'open,' so that pronouncements conforming to the state religion are not to be dismissed out of hand as propaganda." N. Chomsky, "Foreign Policy and the Intelligentsia," in *Images and Ideas in American Culture*, ed. by Arthur Edelstein (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1979), p. 23.

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still try, to overthrow civilization and to return to tribalism. And it suggests that what we call nowadays totalitarianism belongs to a tradition which is just as old or just as young as our civilization itself."[2]

The works of the Frankfurt School, especially *Studies in Authority and the Family*, *The Authoritarian Personality*, and *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, developed a version of Popper's themes concerning the dark impulse buried within the liberal philosophical tradition and an account of the non-violent management of dissent as an expression of totalitarian control, which became the dominant view of the New Left. But the concept of a totalitarian society is a mythical, inherently confused and impressionistic concept whose ambiguities ultimately allow for either its opportunistic or wholly rhetorical use. Further, its uncritical adoption into social theory in the last 50 years has led to a distorted view of social structure and development. It has convinced diverse political theorists that totalistic administration of society is possible and even likely, whether that development is thought by those theorists to be for better or worse. Once such a prospect is feared or embraced, the problems of political theory almost entirely center on preventing or encouraging this supposed development.

Here it is not a matter of proposing an alternative analysis of the phenomena which the concept of totalitarianism was originally meant to capture, nor was the phenomenon itself wholly misconceived by this concept. Those societies picked out by the concept are certainly in need of criticism and the dangers cited are real. First, however, the question is whether those societies represent unique, *sui generis* phenomena. Second, the following should not be confused with the various apologies for Soviet-type societies running roughly from sophisticated attempts such as Merleau-Ponty's *Humanism and Terror* to vulgar, belated efforts at rehabilitating Stalinism (after the collapse of the New Left) as found in H. Bruce Franklin's "Introduction" to *The Essential Stalin*. Third, the point is not whether the idea of totalitarianism might have rationalized post-war American foreign policy. It is a matter of a theoretical "prism" that dominated thinking; the fact that the "prism" also conveniently justified policies which were actually desired for economic or strategic reasons is irrelevant. Utility is not the reason the concept is faulty (though its convenience might be an effect of its ambiguity). Its limitations would remain even if it had not been used instrumentally in the defense of Machiavellian politics.

The word "totalitarian" is usually traced to Italian fascism. It appears in a speech by Mussolini on June 22, 1925 when he speaks of the fascists

2. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. 1 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. ix.

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with "la nostra feroce volontà totalitaria."[3] Gentile, in the same year, had spoken of fascism as a "una concezione totale della vita" and in the next few years the phrase "lo stato totalitario" began to appear. In the *Enciclopedia Italiana* the article on fascism which is signed by Mussolini, but apparently written by Gentile, states, "The Fascist conception of the state is all-embracing, and outside of the state no human or spiritual values can exist, let alone be desirable." In the early 1930s, Carl Schmitt began to analyze the tendency toward a "total state," which he understood as the "self-organization of society as the state."[4] He construed this turn in a "dialectical development . . . from the absolute state of the 17th and 18th centuries, over the neutral state of the liberal 19th century, to the total state of the identity of state and society." In such a state "there is nothing that is not at least potentially political." He found this transformation most evident in the economic sphere — the turn to the "total state" was a turn to the "economic state" and "economic politics." Pursuing his analysis further, he examined Italy, which he described as a state total in a qualitative sense, i.e., a state which allows no internal forces to oppose it. But in this sense, he said, every state is potentially a total state.

If Schmitt did not attempt to combine absolutism and popular sovereignty in a "totalitarian state," Gentile did. In 1948, three years before his murder, the tortured logic of his thought can be seen in his attempt to rationalize his career: "And so, nothing private; and no limits to state action. Totalitarianism . . . appears to make the state swallow the individual, and to absorb into authority completely the liberty that should be set against every authority that limits it . . . But one might say just the opposite: . . . authority is resolved completely in liberty. Lo and behold, absolutism is overturned and appears to have changed into its opposite, and the true absolute democracy is not that which seeks a limited state but that which sets no limits to the state that develops in the inmost heart of the individual, conferring on his will the absolutely universal force of law."[5]

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3. Karl Dietrich Bracher, "Totalitarianism," in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. Robert Burrowess, "Totalitarianism: The Revised Standard Edition," *World Politics* 21 (January, 1969). Michael Curtis, *Totalitarianism* (London: Transaction Books, 1980). Leonard Schapiro, *Totalitarianism* (New York: Preager, 1972). H. J. Spiro, "Totalitarianism," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 16, pp. 106-12.

4. Cf. Carl Schmitt, "Die Wendung zum totalen Staat" (1931), in Schmitt, *Positionen und Begriffe im Kampf mit Weimer-Genf-Verseillies 1923-1939* (1940) Second Edition (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1988), pp. 146-157; and Carl Schmitt, "Weiterentwicklung des totalen Staat in Deutschland" (1933), in Schmitt, *Verfassungsrechtliche Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1924-1954: Materialien zu einer Verfassungslehre* (1958), Second Edition (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1973), pp. 359-365, especially the afterword, pp. 365-366.

5. Giovanni Gentile, *Genesis and Structure of Society*, Trans. by H.S. Harris (Urbana:

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The most famous warning concerning these developments and, according to some, prediction of the totalitarian state is found in de Tocqueville's suggestion of democratic authoritarianism; a society which he claims is unique among all previous forms of oppression. "Try as I will, I cannot find a phrase which will render with precision the conception which I have formed of this oppression . . . the old words 'despotism' and 'tyranny' will not do. It is something new which is in my mind. I must therefore try to describe it, because I cannot give it a name . . . I can see an immense crowd of men, who resemble one another and who are all equal, all ceaselessly revolving in their tracks in order to procure for themselves the small, vulgar pleasures which overwhelm their souls. . . . Above all this crowd there rises an immense tutelary power which takes upon itself to assure their enjoyment and to watch over their destinies. It is absolute, minutely punctilious, orderly, foreseeing, and mild. . . . It does not break wills, it softens them, it bends and guides them . . . It is not tyrannous: it prevents, it constrains, it enervates, it dazes, it stupefies, and it reduces in the end each nation to no more than a flock of timid and hardworking beasts, whose government is their shepherd."[6]

With this Foucaultian language and imagery of "non-violent slavery," de Tocqueville goes on to say that though such a condition is preferable to one in which we are ruled by despots, he considers it a new threat. For several decades, the idea of totalitarianism as a unique social formation was expanded in this way, most dramatically by the Frankfurt School. Soviet and American societies, it was argued, have realized the same level of totalistic control and management, but in different "styles," with the American model being for some more sinister and ultimately more stable because it resembles de Tocqueville's feared paternal domination.

University of Illinois Press, 1960), p. 179. Kant had already warned about this attitude, which one finds similarly in Hegel's defense of the state, when Kant wrote against Hobbes and benevolent absolute rulers. "Under such a *paternal government* the subjects, as immature children who cannot distinguish what is truly useful or harmful to themselves, would be obliged to behave purely passively and to rely upon the judgement of the head of the state as to how they ought to be happy, and upon his kindness in willing their happiness at all. Such a government is the greatest conceivable despotism, i.e., a constitution which suspends the entire freedom of its subjects, who henceforth have no rights whatever." Kant, "On the Relationship of Theory to Practice in Political Right," in *Kant: Political Writings*, 2nd edition, trans. by H.B. Nisbett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 74.

6. De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol II, Part 4, Chapter VI.

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Arendt

Undoubtedly the most famous statement about a new and unique social formation is Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. It ranks with Karl Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies* and J.H. Talmon's *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* among the central philosophical accounts of this concept. *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy,* by Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, attempted to give the concept empirical and operational content (more about that below).[7] However, Arendt's book is surely the most confusing and idiosyncratic of the group. Arendt's central assumption is that totalitarianism is a unique and new society, wholly unprecedented and *sui generis*; in effect, it is the new society that de Tocqueville could not name. Thus from the very beginning her project has a paradoxical character, since it appears to be the study of the historical preconditions and background to a result which she claims has no known causal preconditions, results from no laws of development, and for which there is neither an explanation nor a narrative coherence. Totalitarianism is not only unprecedented and unexpected, it is, as she often reiterates, literally beyond human understanding.

In spite of this skeptical attitude, the book often reads as straight-forward historical narration. But, at best, it is a strange history. Though the work is long, there is often little or no historical evidence at the base of her fundamental claims because those claims are so ambiguous. The historical accounts also often become literary analyses, as in the case of the entire section on racism and colonialism in Africa, which is an extended reading of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.[8] Since Arendt remains confused and confusing about the very periodization or identification of her central object, even given the problems of documentation

7. In the next three sections the page numbers in parentheses will refer to the author designated by each section, respectively. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1966); Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (New York: Preager, 1968); Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967).

8. The problem of the literary background to the idea of totalitarianism deserves its own discussion. But George Kennan makes the following revealing admission in his introductory talk to the first important conference on the topic in 1953. "When I try to picture totalitarianism to myself as a general phenomenon, what comes into my mind most prominently is neither the Soviet picture nor the Nazi picture as I have known them in the flesh, but rather the fictional and symbolic images created by such people as Orwell or Kafka or Koestler or the early Soviet satirists." George F. Kennan, "Totalitarianism in the Modern World," in *Totalitarianism: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, ed. by Carl J. Friedrich (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 19.

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and evidence (Arendt grants that her sources about Stalinism were questionable), the case is never made. Furthermore, subsequent research on German Fascism and Stalinism has simply not confirmed the outlines of her basic thesis about the degree of control and centralization and the unique nature of the regime.

One of the tensions in the book is that Arendt talks about totalitarianism as both a general trend of Western culture and as a specific social formation restricted, in her account, to German fascism during the last years of Hitler's rule and Stalinism during the purges. No other society, including Franco's Spain or Mussolini's Italy, counts as a case of totalitarianism. However, this high degree of specificity is often forgotten in the rest of the book where quite broad movements of modern culture such as bureaucracy, imperialism, and the "rise of modern society" are all in some fashion implicated in the emergence of this unique phenomena. But there is no account, given that such broad cultural movements are common to all modern societies, why totalitarianism arises where it does; except where Arendt claims that it is finally a mystery.

Certain developments of totalitarianism are the result of intentional, purposeful actions, whereas others are matters of social change beyond human design and thus only perceivable or understandable retrospectively. At several points Arendt stresses the unprecedented character of totalitarianism by removing it from the domain of human action and psychology altogether. It is an event beyond human comprehension and our common sense motivations. She claims that, "none of our traditional legal, moral or common sense utilitarian categories . . . help us to come to terms with, or judge, or predict their course of action" (460). She even adds that we must reject attempts to *explain* totalitarianism: "the great temptation to explain away the continually incredible by means of liberal rationalization" (440). But, simultaneously, she tries to "situate" the phenomenon and develops a proto-type explanation of its occurrence through her analysis of the policies, strategies, and psychological instabilities of Hitler and Stalin.

Generally, Arendt argues that the crisis of the 20th century manifests itself in three ways, all brought about by the collapse of "bourgeois-dominated class society" and the 19th century nation-state. The three manifestations are anti-Semitism (or racism), imperialism, and totalitarianism. Even though she admits to having read little of the Marxist literature when writing *Origins*, she accepted the Luxemburg-Hilferding-Lenin thesis about imperialism weakening nation states through the

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dominance of international finance capital.[9] Similarly, she accepted a version of the "socialism or barbarism" alternative after the collapse of bourgeois democracies: a position which gradually came to be modified with her wholesale attack on all modernization (both in the liberal and radical traditions), in contrast to the values of classical political philosophy (as argued in *The Human Condition*), and in her study of the American revolution as an anomalous development when compared with Europe. However, the bulk of *Origins* is about the first two manifestations, with totalitarianism seen as the third vestigial and unique effect of the other two.

Arendt does claim to use the term totalitarianism "sparingly and prudently," which is why she defends her specification to National Socialism after 1938 and Bolshevism between 1930 and 1950. In her preface to the second edition of the book, written after Stalin's death, she claims that the Soviet Union is now experiencing an "equivocal process of detotalization" (ix) and has emerged from "the nightmare of totalitarianism to the manifold hardships, dangers and injustices of a one-party dictatorship" (xxi). This comment unfortunately begs the question most often asked about her book. What is the difference between totalitarianism and dictatorship?[10]

The closest Arendt comes to defining the main idea is "a form of government whose essence is terror and whose principle of action is the logicality of ideological thinking" (474). She also describes totalitarianism as a society which translates reality into fiction and one that attempts only to prove that everything is possible (392, 458-59). But her repeated theme is that totalitarianism has no *raison d'être* (321). What she means is that it follows no purposive, strategic, or utilitarian

9. One possible explanation for Arendt's odd theoretical position at this time is the role of Heinrich Blücher, her first husband and a former communist intellectual, whose influence on the substance of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* was probably very significant. For further discussion of this influence, see Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Hannah Arendt: For the Love of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 222-68. After its publication Arendt received a Guggenheim grant to supplement the book with a section on Marx and Marxism. That work never resulted in a new version of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, but it did result in *The Human Condition* and the essays in *Between Past and Present*.

10. The need for a difference haunts most theoretical use of the concept. An amusing recent version of this difficulty is the famous article by Jean Kirkpatrick, UN Ambassador during the Reagan administration, who distinguished authoritarian regimes, which the US supported because they could be reformed from within, from totalitarian regimes, which the US did not support because they would never reform themselves due to their level of central control. Rarely has a theoretical defense of policy been so utterly refuted by subsequent events.

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course of action. For example, terror increases precisely once all opposition has been exterminated and that is why none of the usual analyses of policy and decision-making apply. Thus we cannot predict or judge its course of action (460). This tone pervades the sections of the book on this new social formation and again makes the very project paradoxical. Arendt warns the reader against expecting any explanation of what she claims is basically an incredible and fantastic set of events. In fact, her mythologization of totalitarianism resembles the self-conception of the societies she claims to study.

The central event of totalitarianism, for Arendt, is the concentration camp and genocide. But the camp is not a policy, not an exercise in power or revenge, it is "an experiment simply into what is possible" (436, 440). While she reached this conclusion with some documentation on German Fascism and almost no documentation on Stalinism, she never allowed any new information about either regime to change her mind. This basic view was a kind of principle of analysis rather than a conclusion. She, in effect, deduced the account of these societies from this central idea that their exercise of power is *sui generis* and purposeless.

The weakest aspect of Arendt's analysis is the problem of human intentionality. Her social philosophy is filled with periodizations and structures that could not result from any human motivation, planning, or intentionality. Just as no individual sought to bring about the Renaissance, which is the name given a period by later generations to designate what they thought was important; so Arendt's rise of mass society and prevalence of "homelessness" are invisible-hand type events: such changes occur independently of individual intentions, or as unintended consequences of otherwise innocuous intentional actions.

Sometimes Arendt explains totalitarianism in terms of the explicit actions of leaders, elites and cadres. In those contexts she *rejects* the argument that totalitarianism is the unintended consequence of modernization. Her reason for dismissing this picture is not that she wants to protect modern industrial societies from such a wholesale condemnation (in fact she often seems to share the view that modernism is proto-totalitarian). But since she rejects the theory of a causal emergence of totalitarianism out of modernization (in which case it would not be *sui generis*), she must deny that totalitarianism is explainable or understandable as part of human action and historical development. She is first and foremost committed to its being unique, *sui generis*, and thus fantastic.

But Arendt cannot have it both ways. If totalitarianism ends with

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both Hitler and Stalin, being linked in some ways to the peculiarities of their delusions and policies, it is thereby not related to certain structural changes that all modern societies undergo. Then, if totalitarianism exists it is simply accounted for in terms of their motives and intentions, no matter how bizarre. But in that case totalitarianism is not some unique and mysterious phenomena at all; nor does it require lengthy discussions of mass society, bureaucracy, or imperialism. The point would be that none of these are really preconditions for totalitarianism because its sufficient condition is a specific kind of leader. For instance, Arendt's discussion of colonialism and racism is about England, not Germany. Her discussion of racism is silent concerning why a totalitarian society emerges in one situation and not another (other than the later claims about the leader's intentions). Her account either rests on rejecting such questions because the final event is *sui generis* or appealing to the ruler's psychology.

Totalitarianism, if it is a useful concept, is either part of general social changes, and then we need to know why it emerges here and not there, or it is specific to the intentions and motives of some leader, in which case we need an explanation for that link between personality and social formation (a connection Arendt often denies on principle). If totalitarianism is neither of the above and remains irreducibly unique and mysterious, then it has nothing to do with the analysis of modern mass society; and one finally wonders what is its point.

Friedrich and Brzezinski

In *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* Friedrich and Brzezinski do not offer a philosophical account like Arendt, but an empirically oriented syndrome of characteristics that would mark a regime as totalitarian. Unlike Arendt, they do not emphasize the fantastic, demonic, or non-explanatory aspects of totalitarianism. In fact, it is precisely their attempt to be wholly operational that reveals problems with the central concept. However, like Arendt, Friedrich and Brzezinski reject any teleological account of the phenomenon. Totalitarianism for them is not a direct result of modernization, technologization, secularization, or economic planning; it is *sui generis*. But teleology does often come in through the back door in their analyses. It appears in such phrases as the "needs of the system," as "maintenance of inherent dynamics" (109, 150, 155) or in the goals, motives, or intentions of the leader or ruling elites (84-5, 130-31). Their *ad hoc* theorizing leads to the hypothesis of some instrumental relation between totalitarianism and an ideologically based

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goal of massive social restructuring (84-5). In fact they seem to conclude that totalitarianism is always the result of such a goal (293-99). Thus the idea is that totalistic change begets terror.

Friedrich says in his preface to the new edition that totalitarianism is "a system of rules for realizing totalistic intentions under modern political and technical conditions" (17). Totalitarianism is a matter of certain kinds of intentions and ideologically motivated efforts at social change and thus does not represent some supra-individual movement of human history. The category of terror is expanded to include psychic terror, but also even widespread social consensus. The condition about a centralized economy is relaxed (223-24) to allow for movements of decentralization within totalitarianism. The authors also grant that totalitarian regimes will eventually resemble other governments in their public ends and objectives, unlike Arendt's claim that their policies will remain outside our normal strategic categories. The authors introduce distinctions between early and late versions of regimes, and harsh and lenient variants, mostly to accommodate developments in the Soviet Union.

Totalitarianism Dictatorship and Autocracy develops a famous six factor diagnosis of the syndrome. Totalitarian societies are characterized by: 1) an elaborate ideology; 2) a single mass party; 3) a system of terror; 4) a technological monopoly of mass communication; 5) control over weapons; 6) a centralized economy. The grounds for the claim that totalitarian regimes are unique in human history is that points 3-6 in the syndrome are "technologically dependent." But this point does not resolve the issue of why modernization and industrialization does not always produce totalitarianism.

Though the exact six variables remained a questionable strategy, their book held that totalitarianism threatened all modern states to the extent that they aimed at a centralized management of socio-economic crises and thus a monopoly of political power. Such regimes claim, in a variety of ways, a higher form of popular government and legitimacy. Friedrich and Brzezinski's attempt at a topology never successfully confronts the tension between its use as a tool of organizational study and its historical relevance. The simplicity of the factors is attractive for orienting inquiry, but the syndrome had to be continually adjusted to match the historical record. Friedrich and Brzezinski echo de Tocqueville's theme of the possibility of maintaining pseudo-democratic appearances with massive collective control. But, again, that pushed the thesis in the direction of being a wholesale account of all modern societies wherein the coercive apparatus was merely a difference of degree but not of kind.

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Marcuse

It is very fruitful to read Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* in the context of Friedrich and Brzezinski's work. Though the latter post-dates Marcuse's book, Marcuse would have been familiar with State Department Soviet Studies and the various conferences held on the topic starting in 1953. At any rate, he adopts a similar diagnosis of totalitarianism and its inner connection to modernization. What he is willing to do is follow the logic by which the concept expands to include all modern societies, thus he makes a virtue of the very weakness of the thesis.

For Marcuse, the productive apparatus in modern industrial society becomes "totalitarian to the extent to which it determines not only the socially needed occupations, skills and attitudes, but also individual needs and aspirations. It thus obliterates the opposition between the private and public existence, between individual and social needs. Technology serves to institute new, more effective and more pleasant forms of social control and social cohesion" (xv). But in connecting totalitarianism to technology, he does not take a stance wholly against modernization. His argument is that technological control contains the potential for greater liberation. However, this potential freedom inherent in "mechanization and standardization" is continually thwarted by an obsolete political superstructures of control (what he called in his study of Freud "surplus repression"). Marcuse then holds out the possible release of this potential freedom through a centralized economy. "If the productive apparatus could be organized and directed toward the satisfaction of the vital needs, its control might well be centralized; such control would not prevent individual autonomy, but render it possible" (2).

This defense of central planning by Marcuse, in spite of its inner connection with totalitarianism in current history, contains one expression of what could be called the "positive thesis" concerning theories of totalitarianism. There was always the possibility of a positive reading of totalistic projects of social change. A case in point would be B. F. Skinner's *Walden Two*, which appeared, ironically, the same year as the archetypal literary version of the "negative thesis," namely Orwell's *1984*. The famous "end of ideology" debate in the late 1950s, where social antagonisms are overcome by scientific management and planning, the behaviorist project of reshaping human behavior through positive reinforcement schedules, or Leninist promises that once the coercive state apparatus withered away the problems of social planning could be handled by any old cook or mailman — all share Marcuse's qualified optimism about centralized control.

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Of course, Marcuse rejects behaviorism, the scientific management strategies, and Leninism, at least in their bare forms, but he retains the hope of some possibility of perfectionist central management. Thus, for Marcuse, the accusation of totalitarianism, though as vague and shifting as in Arendt, is no longer tied to any specific political strategy. "By virtue of the way it has organized its technological base, contemporary industrial society tends to be totalitarian. For totalitarianism is not only a terroristic political coordination of society, but also a nonterroristic, economic-technical coordination which operates through the manipulation of needs by vested interests. It thus precludes the emergence of an effective opposition against the whole. Not only specific forms of government or party rule makes for totalitarianism, but also a specific system of production and distribution which may well be compatible with a pluralism of parties, newspapers, and countervailing powers" (3). But Marcuse's wide-spread application of totalitarianism does not succeed.

First, Marcuse is forced to distinguish throughout the book between real and fake opposition, real and fake needs, real and fake criticisms. But there is no guidance given as to how such a distinction is made. Since the kind of historicist theory of needs that one finds in Marx's views about the relativity of poverty is of no use in this case, Marcuse is forced into a highly dubious and dangerously ambiguous theory of biologically grounded needs.

Second, Marcuse is often reduced to "hidden-hand" rather than "invisible-hand" type explanations. Unlike the latter, which are defensible ways to describe the formation of social ends, the former embrace conspiratorial theories of management and planning to explain the apparent coordination. Hence Marcuse, of all people, has positive things to say about such crude, journalistic social analyses as those of Vance Packard and William H. Whyte. These efforts at divining the hidden conspiratorial strategies of bureaucracies or political leaders are popular versions of "hidden-hand" type accounts and seem inherent in explaining the supposed "success" of totalitarian regimes.

Third, is the poor predictive track record for Marcuse, as well as for Friedrich/Brzezinski. Friedrich argues that "it seems most likely that the totalitarian dictatorship will continue to become more total, even though the rate of intensification may slow down." Marcuse confidently predicts that "assuming . . . no nuclear warfare . . . technical progress would make for continued increase in the standard of living and for continued liberalization of controls. The national economy could

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exploit the productivity of labor and capital without structural resistance while considerably reducing working hours and augmenting the comforts of life. And it could accomplish all this without abandoning the hold of total administration over the people. There is no reason to assume that technical progress plus rationalization will make for automatic liberation and release of negating forces" (42). Though Marcuse cannot be faulted for saying that there will be no "automatic liberation," the account of continued social growth within the context of continued "total administration" is a wild overestimation of both the viability of the concept and the stasis of such societies.

There have been two kinds of response to Marcuse's claim that totalistic management can succeed indefinitely. The cultural Left has gone on to extract ever more complex epicycles of cultural control over what it continues to consider a potentially revolutionary populace. It accepts Marcuse's analysis of totalistic control, but continually predicts some imminent breakdown due to resistance by "the people" but guided by disaffected members of administrative, governmental, bureaucratic, and educational institutions. The cultural and political Right has argued either that the problem is one of moral and spiritual resistance against modernism *per se* or, in more recent years, that a rising standard of living, harmony between capital and labor, growing social consensus, greater leisure time and shorter working hours is simply indistinguishable from the utopian "liberation" Marcuse offers as the promise of central planning. Thus Marcuse's demand for "negative forces" can only be an irrational, elitist, or paternal vestige.

But these alternatives to Marcuse's analysis assume the truth of his claim that totalistic management correctly describes the current situation and that it can be indefinitely expanded. He never questions this assumption and adopts conspiratorial speculations to preserve the guarantee of total administration. "The prospects of containment of change offered by the political or technological rationality depend on the prospect of the welfare State. Such a State seems able to raise the standard of administered living, a capability inherent in all advanced industrial societies where the streamlined technical apparatus . . . depends for its functioning on the intensified development and expansion of productivity" (48). He admits that for individuals a pluralistic administration is better than a dictatorial one and he grants that in Western democracies there is some protection for individuals by local administration. But he concludes; "the question must be raised whether this form of pluralism does not accelerate the destruction of pluralism" (49).

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Marcuse must, once more, distinguish real from fake strategies; pluralism which constrains change from pluralism which liberates human potential. But the need for all these distinctions that plague his work rests on the possibility that such a finely crafted containment of change through centralized totalistic planning is real, viable, and sustainable.

Conclusion

The term totalitarian has been used to cover a complex set of diverse problems concerning modern society. The core error has been to assume these problems all trace back to a new, unique social formation. The thesis of totalitarianism has attempted to capture, among other factors, the centrality of economic planning, the threat of massive control over societies due to technological innovation, and the separation of the state from communities. Unfortunately, the effort has been rhetorical rather than explanatory.

The first problem is economic planning. While all societies monitor development and require various amounts of economic planning, the objections raised by neo-classical economics have prevailed.[11] Such economic planning is not possible, and when states push beyond Keynesian strategies their efforts produce counter-tendencies that either surreptitiously reintroduce the market mechanisms which the plan was meant to eliminate, or make the managerial task self-defeating regardless of the technology available. Thus while it is important to point out how massive controls would be intensified in specific historical situations to maintain inherently faulty projects of economic planning, that task does not require the concept of a unique totalitarian social formation; nor is planning alone evidence for such a society. In fact, some societies that in most other ways fit the vague concept of totalitarianism, such as Pinochet's Chile, opposed economic planning.

The second problem concerns massive control over populations and political activity. It has been assumed, wrongly, that this is unique to the 20th century. But even genocidal solutions are, unfortunately, not unique to this century (though there is the matter of sheer numbers and technology). The question is whether there is some historically new and unique level of success (suggested by Orwell's literary vision). The evidence is overwhelmingly against the view that either in socialist or capitalist societies (excluding the special circumstances of a world war) a

11. Though somewhat dated, it is hard to improve on the succinct account in Ludwig von Mises, *Omnipotent Government: The Rise of the Total State and Total War* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1969), specifically Chapter XI, "The Delusions of World Planning."

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central state apparatus has been able to eradicate and control dissent and opposition in the fashion that the concept of totalitarianism proposes. In fact, such efforts at massive monitoring and control, which will always occur in various forms, continually fall victim to feed-back problems and managerial self-destruction. That is, the need for information about real conditions of social life is constantly at odds with projects of massive control and pacification.

The impact in the 20th century of such monitoring techniques as the census, the collection and storage of vast statistical records, the use of questionnaires, and the data available through centralized taxation and social security is significant. But to subsume all these aspects under the idea of totalistic control is hopelessly misleading. Such records and devices paradoxically often make projects of managerial control more complex, faulty, and defeatable. That does not mean we have the best of all possible worlds. It does mean that the absolute and holistic predictions of control were exaggerated. For example, in recent years in the Soviet Union the use of public opinion polls, a technique often attacked by radical social scientists as inherently manipulative, dominative and totalistic, became a tool for reform and political change. For all the weaknesses of such techniques, the polls very simply revealed discrepancies between public opinion and State ideologies.

The third problem is by now the old question of how a modern state obliterates forms of community. Undoubtedly, such tensions exists; but once again it gives no guide to analysis to assume that there is a new social formation which succeeds in totally administering populations to the extent that all communities and social structures crumble. It is not simply a matter of denying the prediction, since the evidence is obviously against the totalistic assumption. The point is that the concept is misleading also in presenting political theory with a false problem and directing attention to a fictional or purely rhetorical possibility. The thesis of a common totalitarian destiny, threat, or hope for modern industrial societies has not served us in understanding either the problems in these societies or their potential for change.

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Populism and Republican Jurisprudence

Andrew Fraser

Introduction

The antagonistic relation of "Populism vs. the New Class" has been prefigured in Paul Piccone's and G.L. Ulmen's article on European unification.[1] There, populism is understood in terms of autonomous organic communities' resistance to the New Class' centralizing logic of domination. They argue that in the US the populist struggle "to resist capitalist manipulation and New Class domination" has been lost. But in Europe a genuine populist democracy could become possible by "recycling European jurisprudence and the original American federalist model."[2] Indeed, Piccone and Ulmen claim that "the most likely paradigm for a unified Europe will be a federal structure similar to the one provided by the American constitution, which has Romanist origins and, as such, already embodies the spirit of European jurisprudence."[3]

But what is "the spirit of European jurisprudence" and what role did it play in the constitution of the early American republic? Contrary to Piccone and Ulmen's position, it was the deep-rooted monarchal traditions of European jurisprudence that stymied the development of a durable federal distribution of civic authority in the American republic. Monarchy, or the rule of one, is a constitutional form that has survived the abolition of kingship even in most ostensibly republican states. The

1. Paul Piccone and G.L. Ulmen, "Schmitt's 'Testament' and the Future of Europe," in *Telos* 83 (Spring 1990), pp. 3-34.

2. "Schmitt's 'Testament' and the Future of Europe: Four Exchanges," in *Telos* 85 (Fall 1990), p 113.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 113.

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"one" who rules may be a prince, a pope, a president, a dictator or even the nation itself, understood as the source of a binding general will. Whatever the precise form adopted by the endless succession of monarchal regimes in European history, they have all invoked the authority of Roman law to assert their sovereign claims. It is time that we went back to the republican roots of civic freedom in the Greek *polis* to recover an alternative to the imperial logic of that Romanist tradition.

Americans have abolished the monarchy "as such," but they have retained the essence of what the Crown once "stood for": a hierocratic tradition of rule-from-above. True, in the early American republic sovereign authority was no longer vested in the inviolable person of a hereditary monarch, but few American lawyers have ever doubted that the effective source of law-making authority remains the sovereign state. Neither radical populists nor conservative lawyers in the American republic ever succeeded in creating a distinctively *republican* jurisprudence in place of the inherited European traditions of sovereignty-from-above.

Certainly occasional populist revolts in the name of sovereignty-from-below have offered no real alternative. Indeed it was the populist cry of "popular sovereignty" that first gave conservative forces just the doctrinal weapon they needed to outflank radical state legislatures during the "critical period" under the Articles of Confederation.[4] It is not at all difficult to portray the adoption of the Constitution of 1787 as the first great victory of the legal vanguard of an embryonic New Class over the threat of populist insurgency. That victory was achieved by adapting the radical democratic language of popular sovereignty to a European tradition of natural jurisprudence that had already established the enlightened despot as the prototype of Schmitt's "motorized legislator."[5]

If modern American federalism is a "travesty" of constitutionalism, it is not because its original populist purity has been "corrupted by legal positivism and statism."[6] The architects of the new constitutional order recognized that once the American people-at-large stepped into the shoes vacated by the British Crown a vast reservoir of political legitimacy

4. Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (New York: Norton, 1972).

5. Carl Schmitt, "The Plight of European Jurisprudence," in *Telos* 83 (Spring 1990), pp. 50-53; cf. Leonard Krieger, *An Essay on the Theory of Enlightened Despotism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975) and Sheldon S. Wolin, *The Presence of the Past: Essays on the State and the Constitution* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

6. Piccone and Ulmen, "Four Exchanges," *op. cit.*, p. 115; Piccone and Ulmen, "Future of Europe," *op. cit.*, p. 33.

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would become available to those who came to occupy the seats of governmental authority. The generation and distribution of governmental power in the interest of national growth and prosperity became the essence of American constitutionalism. By consenting to the new constitutional order, the people directed "streams of power" into channels controlled and directed by their governors. A constitution based explicitly on the principle of popular sovereignty need not be understood as a *katechon* restraining the growth of a centralized legal despotism. On the contrary the sovereignty of the people acquired a quite different meaning once it became fused with the modernized monarchal spirit of European natural jurisprudence.[7]

Popular Sovereignty and the Federal Principle

Within the new constitutional order popular sovereignty "now assumed a different meaning: it referred to the material power of the entire collectivity, the aggregate of its social resources that consent now made potentially available to the State."[8] The despotic potential contained in the original constitutional blueprint remained unrealized until late in the 19th century. For much of that period, at least until the Civil War, the US could be and was regarded as a kind of "stateless society" marked by a radical diffusion of political power. But not even that radical decentralization provided individuals with "the opportunity of *being* republicans and of *acting* as citizens" in constitutionally entrenched and legally autonomous local communities. Instead, informal political power passed into the hands of political parties and courthouse cliques. In the "state of courts and parties" that predated the rise of the contemporary corporate welfare state, the "functionalization of the law" in the interests of economic and social development was widely practiced. But it was a task carried out primarily by state judiciaries and not by the executive and legislative arms of the national government.[9]

Piccone and Ulmen recognize that the creation of a federalist alternative to the centralizing logic of national sovereignty requires that careful attention be paid to "the established traditions of jurists" as an autonomous source of law in their own right.[10] They do not appear to

7. Andrew Fraser, *The Spirit of the Laws: Republicanism and the Unfinished Project of Modernity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

8. Wolin, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

9. Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 253; Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

10. Piccone and Ulmen, "The Future of Europe," *op. cit.*, p. 25.

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have recognized the extent to which the federal principle in Anglo-American constitutional jurisprudence has been hollowed out and deprived of normative significance by the essentially monarchal, if ostensibly democratic, language of popular sovereignty. If populism is to be identified with a strong federation of autonomous local communities, populists must renounce their historic allegiance to the legal language of absolute, unitary and indivisible sovereignty.

The recurrent and continuing failure of populism in America is intimately related to the failure of American lawyers to develop a distinctively republican jurisprudence solidly rooted in a federal distribution of civic authority. From the time of the revolution against the British Parliament, American populists have been persuaded that the principle of popular sovereignty, not the federal principle, represents the essential defining feature of a free republican society of rights-bearing individuals. Federalism itself came to be seen as a defence of the sovereignty of the people institutionally embodied in the various states of the Union. This amounted to a serious distortion of the republican significance of the federal principle. Federalism in a republican polity has more to do with the rights of citizens than with the rights of governments. But once the crucible of civil war "fused the several states bound loosely in a federal *Union* under a weak central government into a new *Nation* forged by the fires of war,"[11] the federal principle lost even the borrowed legitimacy conferred by a states' rights interpretation of the constitution. The federal principle has been subordinated completely to the absolute, unitary and indivisible logic of popular sovereignty. The Supreme Court has abandoned the effort to endow the federal principle with determinate constitutional meaning. Even those American constitutional scholars identified with the republican revival have applauded the constitutional demise of federalism on the ground that "once *vox populi* becomes the only judicially cognizable source of a social-welfare function, there can be no judicially cognizable answer to the question of which strain is to prevail when the people speak, simultaneously but discordantly, through state governments and through Congress."[12]

Clearly the American legal profession has shown itself unable, in its present form, to solve the central problem posed by Piccone and Ulmen and which is at the core of a modernized republican jurisprudence;

11. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The American Civil War* (London: Penguin, 1990), p. viii.

12. Frank Michelman, "States' Rights and States' Roles: Permutations of 'Sovereignty' in *National League of Cities v Usery*," in *Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 86 (1977), p. 1195.

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namely, how to devolve the sovereign authority wielded by the bureaucratic apparatus of the corporate welfare state into the polynomic structure of a federal community of communities. The populist recovery of the federal principle should begin with the jurisprudential tasks left incomplete and unfinished by the creation of the American republic. The original design of the American federal constitution was republican in little more than name. In substance the American constitution succumbed to the seductive and recurrent appeal of enlightened despotism held out by the European tradition of natural jurisprudence. Intended to *enhance* rather than to *limit* the legally despotic concentration of sovereign authority in the state, the American constitution never made a decisive departure from the monarchal paradigm of Westminster constitutionalism. The political conventions of popular sovereignty do not, by themselves, a republic make. Even in the United Kingdom the conventions of popular sovereignty have served as a reservoir of political legitimacy for those who continue to act in the name of the Crown. Apologists for the monarchical constitution of Great Britain often describe it as a "disguised republic." One could characterize the American constitution with equal assurance as a "disguised monarchy." Until American lawyers, as well as the American people-at-large, break with the monarchal spirit of their established constitutional traditions, it seems little unlikely that the federal principle will come to play a central role in the reconstitution of American society.

Civic Federalism and the Established Traditions of European Jurisprudence

Not only have American lawyers failed to provide a secure constitutional foundation for a federal *state*. They have proved unable or unwilling to extend the federal principle into the institutional life of American *civil society*. Had they done so, it might now be possible to conceive civil society as something other than the passive recipient or beneficiary of a legal order posited by the law-making authority vested exclusively in the executive, legislative and judicial organs of the sovereign nation-state. Had the populist movement of the late 19th century been able to reap the fruits of a republican jurisprudence nurturing the institutional autonomy and defining the civic responsibilities of ordinary corporate enterprises, it might have avoided its fatal obsession with the monarchal image of presidential power. A modernized republican jurisprudence could renew ancient traditions of mixed and balanced government by recognizing the jurisgenerative capacity of the multiplicity of "little republics" constituted within the organic communities and corporate enterprises of an autonomous and transnational civil society. By devolving the sovereign

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authority now formally monopolized by the public apparatus of the state into the hitherto private realm of civil society, a modernized republican jurisprudence could endow the federal principle with new constitutional meaning. It might also help to wrest the concept of civil society away from identification with the conformist liberalism so scorned by Piccone and Ulmen. Federalism could become the animating spirit of a new constitutional order in which both the people and members of the legal professions could at long last find ways to act as citizens within the institutional life of modern civil society.

The failure of American lawyers to institutionalize a federal distribution of civic authority within the everyday life of an autonomous civil society reflects the "jurispathic" logic of European natural jurisprudence. Robert Cover has distinguished between two ideal-typical patterns of legal ordering: the paideic and the imperial. Assuming an essentially pedagogic approach to the creation of legal meaning, a paideic legal order would recognize the jurisgenerative or law-making capacity of autonomous organic communities. Each of those communities would possess its own distinctive *nomos* rooted in: "(a) a common body of precept and narrative, (2) a common and personal way of being educated into this corpus, and (3) a sense of direction or growth that is constituted as the individual and his community work out the implications of their law." By contrast, imperial legal orders are "jurispathic," aiming to maintain rather than to create new sources of legal meaning. Imperial norms are typically *enforced* rather than *taught*. As a consequence there emerges "a radical dichotomy between the social organization of law as power and the organization of law as meaning." Judges functioning within the imperial traditions of Anglo-American and European jurisprudence perform a jurispathic function — they "do not create law, but kill it . . . Confronting the luxuriant growth of a hundred legal traditions, they assert that this one is law and destroy or try to destroy the rest."[13]

A modernized republican jurisprudence would embed the paideic impulse in both the organic communities and the intentional groups that together constitute the institutional structure of American civil society. The jurisprudential language of sovereignty and rights inherited by American lawyers has made it unlikely that they will be willing or able to undertake such a task. The emergence of modern republican principles of political architecture and institutional design would have to draw upon older

13. Robert Cover, "Nomos and Narrative," in *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 97, No. 4 (1983), pp. 11-18 and 53.

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models of paideic community for inspiration. Few such communities have survived the rise of the nation-state and the onslaught of capitalist modernity. Even the distinctively American experience of the civil body politic in colonial New England has long since been relegated to constitutional irrelevance in the eyes of American lawyers. It is not altogether clear what Piccone and Ulmen mean by the term "organic communities"; but the fate of such communities must be somehow linked to the constitutional status of villages, towns and cities. Presumably even localized religious, racial and ethnic communities require some form of autonomous municipal organization. Unfortunately the monarchal logic of popular sovereignty in post-revolutionary America soon transformed the republican ideal of municipal autonomy into a constitutional oxymoron.

Many towns and cities in colonial New England existed as civil bodies politic possessed of both private proprietary rights and public governmental powers. Not long after the revolution they were stripped of both their private interests and their general law-making powers. Today the legal identity of a town or city is that of a mere instrumentality of the state legislature. Lacking any "natural" or "inherent" autonomy, municipalities exercise "only those powers delegated to them by state government."[14] Had towns and cities retained their identity as civil bodies politic they might have provided a working model of corporate entities neither wholly public nor wholly private. There seems little doubt that the disintegration and decline of the municipal corporation as a "little republic" reflected the influence of European natural jurisprudence.

Colonial society in New England was something like a federation of autonomous communities. Each of those communities was held together by the strength of mutual promises. It is not easy to account for their appearance and development in terms of the letter or the spirit of European jurisprudence. Very few colonial towns possessed a formal charter; instead, they resembled "the kind of association that created the medieval towns." They had their genesis in "freedom of association" rather than in formal corporate rights. The theoretical justification for their existence was originally found in a covenant theology, not in the formal prescriptions of the secular legal order. Although the towns were very much like other organic communities based on family or religion, "they

14. Gerald E. Frug, "The City as a Legal Concept," in *Harvard Law Review* , Vol. 93 (1980), p. 1062. See also, Joan C. Williams, "The Invention of the Municipal Corporation: A Case Study in Legal Change," in *American University Law Review*, Vol. 34 (1985), p. 369 and Hendrik Hartog, *Public Property and Private Power: The Corporation of the City of New York in American Law, 1730-1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

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were treated by the courts as if they were corporations." When colonial courts acknowledged the corporate identity of towns and cities, they did so by invoking the right of persons to act in concert. The corporate form of those colonial communities reflected a spontaneous insight into "the elementary structure of joint enterprises as such." That insight was not firmly rooted either in an explicitly republican tradition of civic action or in the common law understanding of the corporation. Once the colonial civil body politic lost the mooring provided by the federal theology of the Puritan founders, it could claim only those rights and capacities known to the law.[15]

To the legal mind shaped by European natural jurisprudence, the existence of corporate bodies politic possessed of both governmental powers and private rights was a glaring anomaly. Those who spoke the jurisprudential language of sovereignty and rights "envisioned the world as sharply divided between individual rightholders and state power." As Frug observes, the corporation as civil body politic "exhibited traits of both poles: it was part ruled and part ruler, both an association of individuals and an entity with state-granted power."[16]

In both revolutionary France and early republican America the political theology of popular sovereignty required the jurisprudential excommunication of intermediate corporate bodies standing between the individual and the state.[17] Accordingly "early nineteenth century legal doctrine divided the corporation into two different entities, one assimilated to the role of an individual in society and the other assimilated to the role of the state."[18] No longer would the corporation simultaneously hold rights and wield power. Instead, the private corporation came to be treated as a device to protect proprietary interests, while the public corporation became a dependent creature of the state governments.[19]

The legal destruction of the civil body politic was a jurispathic act. As such it represented an attempt to assert the hegemonic role of the natural jurisprudence of sovereignty and rights. Lawyers, legislators and judges of all political persuasions joined in opposition to the idea that the new American republic could or should be understood as a loose federation of localities, organic communities and other joint enterprises

15. Frug, *op. cit.*, p. 1097; Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 383; Arendt, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-73.
16. Frug, *op. cit.*, p. 1099.
17. On the abolition of corporations in revolutionary France, see William H. Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
18. Frug, *op. cit.*, p. 1099.
19. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-13.

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constituted as corporate bodies politic. The political theology of popular sovereignty underpinning the monarchal ideal of the republic, one and indivisible, dazzled and dominated the legal imagination.

For Hamiltonians, a federal conception of American civil society posed a threat to the centralization of authority under the new Constitution.[20] Jeffersonians might have been committed to states' rights, but they were also determined to resist every effort to insulate corporate entities from public control. They insisted that corporations derived their right to exist from a charter bestowed upon them by the majestic authority of a sovereign people acting through its legislative agents. It became difficult to maintain that corporations were based on the freedom of association and the right of persons to act in concert. To do so would be to acknowledge the jurisgenerative capacity of ordinary civil institutions standing outside and apart from the state. Conservative property owners conceded that the sovereign authority to make law resided exclusively with the state, while seeking to maintain the security of the private interests involved in corporate activities by invoking the doctrine of vested rights.[21] By the mid-19th century it was clear that the established traditions of European jurisprudence offered no refuge for the federal principle.

The Jurisgenerative Foundation of an Autonomous Civil Society

The goal of a modernized republican jurisprudence would be to reconstitute the jurisgenerative capacities of both "organic communities" (based on regional, local, religious, ethnic or social identities) and intentional groups engaged in various joint enterprises. Both organic communities and intentional groups must be recognized as essential constituent elements in an autonomous and transnational civil society in Europe and elsewhere. Piccone and Ulmen pay little or no attention to the constitutive role of intentional groups in the emergence of a revitalized European federalism. Instead they acknowledge the "inevitable" domination of transnational capital while holding out the vague hope that new forms of "industrial decentralization" will mitigate its effects. Somehow the traditions of European jurisprudence will become the "unifying center" of a transformed relation among organic communities, the state and transnational corporations.[22] Given the historical failure of European jurisprudence to deal creatively with intentional communities intermediate between the individual and the state, it seems more likely to remain part of the problem than to provide an easy solution.

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20. Frug, *op. cit.*, p. 1106.
21. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-13.

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There are at least three reasons why a "strong federation of organic communities" requires a novel jurisprudential recognition of intentional groups constituted as civil bodies politic. The first relates to the actual genesis of "strong federalism" as a sociological phenomenon worthy of jurisprudential recognition. Both etymologically and constitutionally the concept of federalism is based on the experience of covenanting together to form a joint enterprise. Most organic communities are grounded in "natural" regional, racial, religious or ethnic identities that "emerge as the by-products of social processes other than the intentional creation of the group."[23] Natural groups are not likely to generate within themselves a civic culture that identifies covenant as the foundation of group identity. One does not normally choose one's social, ethnic, gender, religious, or even regional identity. Most often membership in such groups is a matter of ascription, not choice. Because membership in an intentional community is a matter of choice and decision, it can provide experience of the covenant relation that stands at the core of the federal principle.

Piccone and Ulmen look forward to a European "community of regional entities so culturally heterogeneous and fiercely autonomous" as to preclude the possibility of a new continental project of bureaucratic centralization. It is easy to see how the existence of such organic communities would offer resistance to the centripetal thrust of administrative control. It is not so clear how a common jurisprudential language of sovereignty and rights will be able to overcome the centrifugal pressures of ethnic or religious particularism unless members of organic communities are open to the cross-cutting allegiances provided by participation in a wide range of intentional groups. Widespread popular participation in the sort of intentional groups that bring together heterogeneous collections of individuals in a common or joint enterprise is essential to the creation of federalist civic culture. Only if the federal principle is experienced as a constitutive feature of personal and social identity is it likely that self-enclosed and particularistic organic communities will cease to wrap their claims to autonomy in the monarchal language of sovereignty.

There is a second reason to be concerned with the jurisprudential recognition of intentional groups as civil bodies politic. This has to do

22. Piccone and Ulmen, "Four Exchanges," *op. cit.*, p. 115; Piccone and Ulmen, "The Future of Europe," *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 13.

23. Mark Tushnet, "Law and Group Rights: Federalism as a Model," in Allan C. Hutchinson and Leslie J.M. Green, eds., *Law and the Community: The End of Individualism* (Toronto: Carswell, 1989), p. 285. Tushnet distinguishes between "natural" and "intentional" groups and argues "that the claim that natural groups ought to have legally protected rights is conceptually ambiguous and politically problematic" (p. 277).

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with the prospects for survival of organic communities. How can such communities be expected to survive the homogenizing impact of a consumerist, careerist and militarized corporate culture unless the economy is somehow embedded in the sort of communitarian values emerging from an institutionalized schema of civic action? Families, churches, schools, unions and local communities are all visibly crumbling under the corrosive impact of a pervasive corporate-bureaucratic monoculture. Corporate hegemony is fast becoming the defining characteristic of contemporary social, cultural and economic life. To re-embed the economy in a coherent sense of civic purpose, it will be necessary to break with the political theology of sovereignty. It must become possible to recognize corporate bodies politic, not just as rights holders, but also as power wielders subject to the normative requirements of constitutional jurisprudence. Corporations have, in fact, become private governments. They now possess the capacity to make what amounts to public policy decisions practically indistinguishable from those emanating from governments. Since the operation of markets for securities, products and corporate control has failed miserably to curb the irresponsible and unaccountable exercise of corporate power, new structures of corporate governance are required. In my view, republican principles of political equality and civic responsibility should shape the new order of corporate governance. Let me simply assert the essential principle that, *prima facie*, should guide the "constitutionalization of the corporation." The basic rule governing participation in the remodelled corporate body politic should be "one voice, one vote" and not the present "one share, one vote." Given the ongoing separation of ownership from control reflected most obviously in the appearance of non-voting classes of common stock, the constitutional reformation of the corporate body politic is becoming an increasingly urgent issue.[24] Having been reconstituted as a civil body politic, the corporation could once again straddle the jurisprudential boundary between the res *publicae* of the state and the nomothetic diversity of an autonomous civil society of jurisgenerative organic communities.

The third reason to be concerned with the constitutional role of intentional groups relates directly to the role of jurisprudence as the "unifying center" of a modern federal republic. Whether on the basis of "the

24. William M. Dugger, *Corporate Hegemony* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989); Mark Nadel, "The Hidden Dimensions of Public Policy: Private Governments and the Policy-making Process," in *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (1975); David L. Ratner, "The Government of Business Corporations: Critical Reflections on the Rule of 'One Share, One Vote'," in *Cornell Law Review*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (1970).

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established traditions of jurists" or not, it is clear that the various legal professions (i.e., lawyers, judges, law teachers and legal journalists) will play a central role in defining the constitutional roles and jurisgenerative capacities of both organic communities and artificially constituted civil bodies politic. It is difficult to see how the legal professions can perform that task effectively unless they are able to conceptualize their own distinctive constitutional role and to incorporate their own independent jurisgenerative capacities into their civic and professional identities. In doing so, the legal sector of the New Class might begin to develop a new sense of civic responsibility. At the same time it might become publicly accountable to the people-at-large for the power it now wields over the creation, preservation and transformation of legal meaning.

The Jurisgenerative Role of the Legal Professions

Although Piccone and Ulmen give a prominent role to jurisprudence in establishing the framework of a new European federalism, they are more sceptical about the role of lawyers as universal mediators. "Given the nature of the existing legal profession as well as the present, almost universal, hermeneutical chaos," they see little chance that "a highly moral and presumably exceptionally wise legal profession" could set itself up as an effective bulwark against the "functionalization of law" by "motorized legislators" susceptible to the recurrent temptations of "super-legality." It may well be that this "Schmittian prescription," however "well-meant," is "not very practical."[25] But if it is true that the legal professions are not fit to serve as a constitutional *katechon*, how can they be expected to solve the jurisprudential problems associated with creating other institutions capable of playing that role?

In order to perform that jurisprudential task, the existing American legal profession would undoubtedly have to be reconstituted. If the process of restructuring the legal profession was carried out in accordance with the republican principles of mixed and balanced government, it might contribute to a diminution of the radical indeterminacy now afflicting American legal and constitutional discourse. Legal postmodernism assumes that every legal and constitutional text is open to competing interpretations within an increasingly heterogeneous and conflict-ridden legal community. If the meaning of every text is indeed shaped by a process of contested interpretation, perhaps it is time that the interpretive community of legal professions became recognized as a constituent element of a modern federal republic.

25. Piccone and Ulmen, "Four Exchanges," *op. cit.*, p. 96.

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The judiciary already exists as a recognized interpretive community of lawyers directly incorporated into the structure of governance. Even in the American republic, however, appellate and high court judges normally achieve office through a process of executive appointment. In other common law jurisdictions the election — especially the popular election — of judges is regarded as vile heresy. But why should not the legal interpretive community (i.e., the legal sector of the New Class) itself become responsible for electing those appellate and high court judges whose task it is to pass authoritatively upon the meaning of legal texts? Lower court judges whose primary function is to apply a more or less settled understanding of the law to particular cases should probably be popularly elected. But those judges whose explicit province is the meaning of law should be chosen by their peers in the interpretive communities of jurists, law teachers, legal journalists and law graduates generally. There is no good reason why control over the composition and functions of the judiciary should be controlled by the state.

It is certainly not the case that state control of judicial appointments will ensure that those who control the process of legal interpretation will remain accountable to the public. Such a view involves a kind of willful blindness to the invisible power wielded by the legal members of the New Class-at-large. Judges are but the tip of a sociological iceberg. They remain part of a much wider interpretive community. It may be true that they alone within that community are permitted access to the republican experience of public deliberation and self-governance in the production of legal meaning.[26] Nevertheless, they remain tied to and dependent upon the professional audiences who are required to interpret judicial texts.

There is a direct relationship between the existing structure of the American legal profession and the postmodernist indeterminacy of legal and constitutional texts. The American legal profession provides a good example of Roberto Unger's "structure-of-no-structure." Before we can hope to see the legal sector of the American New Class step out of the shadows to assume public responsibility for its civic role as an interpretive community, it will have to organize itself into a number of intentional professional groups, each with its own distinctive corporate *telos*. It is in this context that the established traditions of European jurists could help

26. According to Frank Michelman, while we are unable "as a nation to practice our own self-government (in the full positive sense), we — or at least we of the "reasoning class" — can at least identify with the judiciary's as we idealistically construct it." See his "Traces of Self-Government" in *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 100, No. 4 (1986), pp. 74-75.

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American lawyers to recover a vital dimension of their lost civic identity. The organization of the European legal professions reveals a close linkage between professional structure and professional ethics.[27] By preserving the distinctive corporate identity of the various legal professions, the structure of legal practice in Europe has established an institutional milieu in which a number of professional roles, each possessed of its own distinctive virtues, are combined and balanced. It seems therefore that the ancient republican traditions of civic virtue and mixed and balanced government have found a more secure refuge in the institutional life of European jurists than among their American counterparts. As things stand, neither the civic virtues nor corporate responsibility find a secure institutional foothold in the amorphous and haphazard structures governing the American legal profession.

American lawyers have come to understand their professional role in sociological rather than civic terms. They have little sense of participation in a corporate "*telos* or role which gives meaning to one's life as an individual, the fulfilment of which is one's purpose in life." Instead in the American experience of professional roles "the self is reduced to a set of demarcated societal functions, devoid of ethical content."[28] One serves one's client's interests as best one can, dealing with each situation as it arises. If one does become concerned with the ethical implications of the lawyer's role, critical legal scholars have agreed that one can only try to develop some sort of "non-professional ethics."[29] Professional ethics have become another legal oxymoron.

H. Patrick Glenn accounts for this situation by reference to the unified nature of the American legal profession and the consequent rise of large law firms carrying out a wide range of specialized functions. In Europe, by contrast, legal practice "is divided amongst several professions." The boundaries between the various legal professions "are fixed by defined incompatibilities, known as such, which prevent members of a profession from undertaking specific activities." Each profession has its own function and its own distinctive corporate *telos*. Each of the professions exercises strong corporate control over its members "through enforcement of ethical standards the explication of which is one of the ongoing functions of the professional body itself."[30] None of those conditions

27. H. Patrick Glenn, "Professional Structure and Professional Ethics" in *McGill Law*, 35 (1990), p. 425.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 432.
29. Cf. William H. Simon, "The Ideology of Advocacy: Procedural Justice and Professional Ethics," in *Wisconsin Law Review* 29 (1978).
30. Glenn, *op. cit.*, pp. 429-30, 426.

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exist in the US with the result that New Class lawyers eagerly embrace a postmodern doctrine of radical indeterminacy which relieves them of any corporate or civic responsibility for the collapse of legal authority.

If the American legal profession was reconstituted along European lines it might also achieve formal constitutional recognition as an interpretive community willing and able to accept responsibility for the election of higher court judges. Reconstituted as autonomous civil bodies politic, each of the legal professions would have to articulate its own publicly defensible standards of what should count as "good judging." It would also have to cultivate the civic virtues appropriate both to judging and the performance of its own distinctive professional role.

Conclusion

All of this would require formal constitutional recognition of the jurisgenerative role played by the interpretive community comprising the various legal professions. Ideally, each of the professional bodies would meet separately in public to perform its electoral function and to debate the issues related to it. Such a procedure would foster awareness both inside and outside each profession of its distinctive corporate *telos*. This program would not represent just another version of New Class domination. Possession of a law degree would entitle anyone to membership in one of several legal communities, each of which would possess its own distinctive competence and professional role in the discursive practices of legal interpretation. If every law degree carries with it the right to participate in the election of high court judges, the practice of legal hermeneutics would become a matter of much more widespread public debate and concern than it is at present. As another check on the power of the legal professions, all those elected to high judicial office by their professional peers could be made subject to popular confirmation after a period of years sufficient for them to demonstrate their fitness.

If contemporary political struggles can be credibly understood as a contest between populism and the New Class, they will not be resolved by the disappearance of the intellectuals and members of the technical, professional and managerial intelligentsia making up the New Class. What needs to be accomplished instead is the transformation of the disembodied, depersonalized, and decontextualized culture of critical discourse that now underwrites the developmental dynamics of the modern corporate welfare state.[31] It must become possible for New Class

31. Cf. Alvin W. Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class* (New York: Continuum, 1979).

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professionals and intellectuals to experience what it means to belong to an autonomous organic community. Likewise, members of organic communities need to become aware of the processes by which the law that guarantees their own autonomy is created, preserved, transformed and often destroyed by the legal professions.

The New Class is not going to go away. Nor can we really hope to kill all the lawyers. It is even less likely that the people-at-large will somehow transform the idea of popular sovereignty into something more than a constitutional illusion. The people-at-large seems fated to reign rather than to rule in their own right. The sovereign rights of rulership have been transferred in perpetuity to governments. In a complex, heterogeneous and conflict-ridden civil society, professionals, managers and intellectuals should be recognized as a constituent element of both "the people" and of government. Democracy can no longer be identified with the will of an undifferentiated mass of private individuals. We must acknowledge that the constituent elements of civil society each possess their own distinctive capacities and special virtues.

Society can no longer be usefully understood in terms of natural and fixed social orders: the One, the Few and the Many. But the ancient traditions of mixed and balanced government are not for that reason any less relevant to the constitution of a modern federal republic. A modern federal constitution would recognize a division of governmental authority between the state and civil society. Civil society would no longer exist as the passive beneficiary of a legal order handed down from on high. Within the institutional framework of civil society, the constitution would seek to fuse power and responsibility in such a way as to generate new forms of civic authority in corporate and professional life. In effect, this means that a republican jurisprudence must turn its attention to the reconstitution of the professional, managerial and intellectual elites that now comprise an irresponsible and unaccountable New Class. Unless that New Class becomes a constituent element in an increasingly autonomous civil society it will simply continue in the self-interested service of an ever more corrupt, disorganized and violent corporate welfare state.

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Democracy and Federalism: Reply to Fraser

Paul Piccone and Gary Ulmen

Andrew Fraser correctly points out that the contraposition of "Populism vs. the New Class" was prefigured in our Schmittian analysis of possible modes of European unification.[1] Our analysis concluded by proposing a strong federalism predicated on European jurisprudence as a general model, with significant implications not only for the US but for all future forms of political organization. Contrary to predominant social democratic schemes turning citizens into clients and technocrats into a new ruling elite, we sought to vindicate the autonomy of that living dimension without which individuality and citizenship become impossible. In this project, however, the major political confrontation is no longer between labor and capital but between the New Class and the population it seeks to manage. Fraser rejects this scenario and argues that European jurisprudence is not the solution but the problem, and that the New Class is not the problem but the solution. At issue here is thus not simply a matter of interpretation but major theoretical differences.

The problems with Fraser are the following: 1) his uncritical acceptance of dubious philosophical assumptions leads him to confuse the past (civil society) with the future (post-welfare state society) and to propose the New Class as the organic intellectuals of a revitalized civil society; 2) an uncritical notion of sovereignty leads him to confuse it with arbitrary authority and to seek its substitution with what turns out to be a presupposed sovereignty with a New Class pedigree; and 3) his failure to consider fundamental constitutional problems leads him to

1. See Paul Piccone and G. L. Ulmen, "Schmitt's 'Testament' and the Future of Europe," in *Telos* 83 (Spring 1990), pp. 3-34; see also "Schmitt's 'Testament' and the Future of Europe: Four Exchanges," in *Telos* 85 (Fall 1990), pp. 93-148.

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misconstrue the dynamics of the welfare state and the conformist nature of his position.

Fulfilling Modernity or Identity Logic?

Fraser sees contemporary political conflicts not as structural but in terms of the incompleteness of an otherwise fundamentally viable world-historical project. Thus the solution is sought in the "fulfillment of the project of a republican jurisprudence" understood as part of that equally unfulfilled "project of modernity." With this he falls squarely in line with that second generation of critical theorists which, unable to sustain the critical thrust of the first generation, deradicalized the analysis into an eclectic liberalism blaming all problems primarily on pre-modern residues and reducing all issues to matters of communication and linguistics. Fraser sees sovereignty as a "monarchal" left-over obstructing the development of a truly emancipatory republican jurisprudence and, instead of discussing laws and institutions as they develop and function, waxes rhapsodic about the *language* describing them. Thus he reduces all issues to various "discourses," presumably limited to New Class careerists seeking to legitimate themselves as the only agents sufficiently competent to talk about politics and jurisprudence — lawyers.

But just as modernity cannot *in principle* be completed, so must Fraser's republican jurisprudence remain necessarily fragmentary and diverse. Whereas classical liberalism originally sought to neutralize the state *vis à vis* 19th-century bourgeois society and then took over that state to carry out its own agenda, Fraser now contraposes an earlier form of that same liberalism, his "autonomous, cosmopolitan and transnational civil society," to the present liberal state viewed as the embodiment of all evil. To the extent that he seeks to return to an idealized *status quo ante*, i.e., before liberalism concretized 19th-century civil society into capitalist society, his proposal, along with that of all the other advocates of civil society, is inherently *reactionary* in the strict sense of the term. Within such a context, it is not surprising that state sovereignty can only be understood implicitly as a secularized theological residue — the legacy of a monotheism in need of rationalization. But here Fraser ends up presupposing precisely what he wants to abolish. Seeking to displace the sovereign state with the polytheism of a civil society corporatism, he stops short of calling for the latter's institutionalization through federalism and opts instead for a republican jurisprudence which ultimately presupposes the very same secularized monotheism he abhors — camouflaged, however, as a pre-Kantian notion of reason.

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Fraser manages to avoid wading into the swamps of political theology, but only at the risk of sinking into the quicksands of an incoherent political theory. Thus his much despised sovereign state is not a legitimate, democratically-grounded *res publica* but a kind of demiurge controlled by predominant economic interests and impervious to either federal or democratic legitimation. Furthermore, instead of trying to interpret this pathological predicament through an analysis of the structural changes the state has undergone since at least the French Revolution, he blames all its faults on state sovereignty *sic et nunc*. His solution, therefore, consists not in attempting to refederalize and redemocratize this centralized welfare state as we proposed, but in implicitly substituting one, allegedly bad, secularization of monarchal sovereignty with another, allegedly good, version of precisely the same thing: republican jurisprudence understood as the legalitarian "jurisgenerative" completion of the project of modernity. But in seeking to complete this process of conceptually objectifying all social reality, modernity accelerates the unfolding of the dialectic of enlightenment and the deployment of identity logic to the point that, having exhausted that mimetic relation to nature necessary for complementing the one-sidedness of concepts, it not only reverts to but undermines the conditions necessary for its effective reproduction. The motorized legislation amassed in this Sisyphean project of completion by means of what Fraser calls "jurisgenerative" republican lawyers will collapse into chaos long before it will have succeeded in turning the projected idyllic cluster of "little republics" organized as corporate bodies into a New Class bureaucratic nightmare where, in order to sneeze, one will first have to file in triplicate an environmental impact statement.

It is becoming increasingly clear that this type of legalitarian totalization is not only politically suspect, since it entails codifying new relations of domination under the pretense of constituting an allegedly neutral *res publica* (limited, however, only to privileged minorities qualifying as linguistically competent speakers), but is also self-defeating. Its fulfillment would correspond to its self-destruction. At any rate, the turning of all consciousness into self-consciousness (or all social practices into legally codified behavior) would not result, as Hegel thought, in the achievement of the Absolute (or, as Fraser assumes, in the completion of modernity), but in a hyper-rational Brave New World run not by big brothers but by little lawyers civil-socializing everyday life into properly negotiated, arbitrated and adjudicated relations.

Fraser's main enemy is obviously the state, for otherwise there is nothing against which "autonomous, cosmopolitan and transnational

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civil society" would have to vindicate its "autonomy." This betrays not only the theory's East European pedigree but also its latent Marxist underpinnings.[2] Accordingly, the state is seen as hostage to economic and lobbying interests and, therefore, not really a *res publica*. But if that were the case, why not attempt to democratize this state, or reconfigure it in such a way that it would be responsive to its citizens? This would involve rationalizing "sovereignty" and, therefore legitimating what for Fraser is a terminally illegitimate and arbitrary authority irreducible to its alleged sources. Without exhausting the meaning of sovereignty, it should be recalled that it necessarily involves an extra-rational decisionistic moment, i.e., freedom, which is irreducible to whatever antecedents may be given. To the extent that Fraser's Enlightenment ideology cannot deal with this extra-rational dimension other than as an extraneous perturbation, abstract rationality (*Verstand*) objectified as a mechanical consensus comes in as a substitute. Here, however, the sovereign decisionistic moment is not erased but fragments into a polytheism concealing sovereignty within the crevices of the particular individuals' decision-making processes (*Verlist der Vernunft*).[3]

This evaporation of freedom into the conceptually impenetrable domain of the *Ding an sich* is consistent with Fraser's fashionable but not

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2. Originally recycled in the 1970s in Poland to oppose communist regimes, "civil society," a defunct 19th-century concept, became part and parcel of the intellectuals' oppositional "anti-politics politics" strategy. This strategy (and the fictional "civil society" it claimed to sponsor) became meaningless as soon as the various communist regimes it was deployed against fell; it then deteriorated to the level of another particularistic old-fashioned political agenda: the empowering of previously marginalized intellectuals as a substitute *nomenklatura*. (Cf. Paul Piccone, "Paradoxes of *Perestroika*," in *Telos* 84 (Summer 1990), pp. 10-17). It sold well in the West, especially among frustrated ex-Marxists of East European origin searching for alternative emancipatory strategies, or to bankrupt disciplines (e.g., sociology) desperately in search of a new academic *raison d'être* after having been discredited as the research arm of the faltering welfare state (cf. Alan Wolfe, *Whose Keeper? Social Science and Moral Obligation* [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989]). Apparently, efforts are underway now to re-market it in Eastern Europe as post-communist political theory. Cf. Andrew Arato, "Rivoluzione, Società Civile e Democrazia," in *Problemi del Socialismo*, No. 4 (Milan: Francoangeli, 1991), p. 61: "Maybe the moment has come to give back to the East the gift we have received from the East: the idea of a self-democratizing autonomous civil society." Maybe this time it will stay there!

3. Fraser's approach parallels Hans Blumenberg's broader account in *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (trans. by Robert M. Wallace [Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1983]). In questioning the "modernity" of the state, Blumenberg claims that the Enlightenment was subverted by a political theology he rejects. Thus, in order to be consistent, he contraposes the sovereignty of reason to the sovereignty of the state. Whereas Blumenberg understands the implications of his Enlightenment philosophy, Fraser does not. By rejecting sovereignty as an inextricable attribute of the state, Fraser ends up proposing a "civil society" unable to reach any decisions: a republican polytheism embroiled

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altogether coherent neo-Kantian pseudo-universalism. The price he ends up paying for chosing this well-trodden philosophical path is that he cannot deal effectively with radical otherness other than by reducing it to an imperfect or undeveloped *specimen* whose identity is thereby determined by the conceptual structure within which it is subsumed. His inability to deal with a *de facto* radical relativism of values, customs and traditions results in the deployment of a legal pseudo-universalism legitimated by whatever consensus lawyers and other legal groupies can reach at any given time to homogenize real particularities and differences obtaining among radically different constituencies. Thus there is no way for his civil-socialized jurisprudence to codify what, from a Western perspective, appear as unacceptable and absurd practices. A *substantive* Western jurisprudence necessarily ends up codifying Western traditions and customs. Thus, as the legalistic secularization of a particularistic Judeo-Christian tradition, it rules out anything conflicting with, e.g., "civil" or "human" rights. If this substantive level is unwarrantedly confused with a regulative federal level, the autonomous status of all particularity is sacrificed to transcendental imperatives. It is precisely to prevent this dogmatic closure that Roman law and European jurisprudence can serve to reconfigure a genuine federalism able to guarantee the real autonomy of the individual units — an autonomy not predicated on the prior acceptance of any seemingly obvious rights and liberties. As in Roman law, *jus gentium* can be overridden not by allegedly universal imperatives camouflaged as federal law, but only in cases in which real conflicts arise that cannot be resolved at a lower level of jurisdiction.

New Class Republicanism or Federalism?

Whereas we maintain that the original American federalism was subverted by a statist involution following the Civil War and suggest the possible deployment of a federalism regrounded on solid Romanist foundations, Fraser argues that what corrupted American republicanism was precisely this Romanist heritage — a flaw remediable only by recycling the republicanism of the Greek *polis*. There is no doubt that the Greek *polis* is one of the essential roots of Western civilization. Yet while this *polis* was a strong *civitas*, it was also a weak *res publica*. For all practical purposes, the latter is a Roman innovation: republicanism is inconceivable divorced from Roman law. There was no "republican jurisprudence" in

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in endless debate but unable to come to any resolutions since the latter require sovereignty. For a more extensive critique of Blumenberg, see G. L. Ulmen's chapter on "Die Metaphysik der Neuzeit" in *Politischer Mehrwert: Eine Studie über Max Weber und Carl Schmitt* (Weinheim: VCH/Acta humaniora, 1991), pp. 131-168.

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the Greek *polis*. Although this issue first arose in Greek political theory, it was not resolved in the legal codification of the *polis*.

The Founding Fathers carefully considered the Greek model and rejected it as far too weak.[4] The "*republican cause*" was seen as feasible only if supplemented by "a judicious modification and mixture of the *federal principle*."[5] Without the latter, attempts to recycle the Greek *polis* in a modern context were seen as more likely to lead to despotism than to democracy.[6] James Madison even foresaw the statist involution that results when the autonomy of the individual units is violated by a totalizing center. With respect to the Greek confederacy, he observed that the "fœderal council . . . had a general authority to propose and resolve whatever it judged necessary for the common welfare of Greece," and that the eventual result was self-destruction.[7] Similarly, Alexander Hamilton criticized the "common council" of the Lycean confederacy for its "delicate species of interference" in the internal affairs of the cities or republics, which he found incompatible with the federal principle. Lycea was Montesquieu's model of "an excellent confederate republic," and Hamilton proceeded to reproach Montesquieu for confusing a confederate republic with "local jurisdictions."[8] Fraser takes Montesquieu as his model, even in the title of his book: *The Spirit of the Laws*.[9] It is not by accident that, along with Montesquieu, he also ends up with what Hamilton branded an "erroneous theory," which

4. James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, "The Federalist No. 18" (December 7, 1787), in *The Federalist*, edited, with Introduction and Notes, by Jacob E. Cooke (Middletown Ct: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), pp. 110-117.

5. James Madison, "The Federalist No. 51" (February 6, 1788), in the *The Federalist*, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

6. This realization of the danger of attempting to duplicate the Greek *polis* in a modern context is now commonplace. See, for example, Gerhard Nebel, "Platon und die Polis," in Nebel, *Griechischer Ursprung*, Vol. I (Wuppertal: Im Marées-Verlag, 1948), pp. 19f., 22 and 27. Nebel shows how the *polis* was based on a notion of unity and identity. This did not allow for the essential distinctions between internal and external, individual and society, which are central to modern consciousness. See Schmitt's comments on Nebel's essay, in particular the distinction between *civitas* and *res publica*, in Carl Schmitt, *Glossarium: Aufzeichnungen der Jahre 1947-1951*, edited by Eberhard Freiherr von Medem (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991), pp. 18ff.

7. According to Madison, the lack of a sharp separation between the federal and lower levels of government led to their downfall: "The powers, like those of the present Congress, were administered by deputies appointed wholly by the cities in their political capacities and exercised over them in the same capacities. Hence the weakness, the disorders, and finally the destruction of the confederacy." James Madison, "The Federalist No. 14" (November 30, 1787), in *The Federalist*, *op. cit.* pp. 110f.

8. Alexander Hamilton, "The Federalist No. 23" (December 18, 1787), *op. cit.*, p. 150.

9. Andrew Fraser, *The Spirit of the Laws: Republicanism and the Unfinished Project of Modernity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

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has no real appreciation for "the novel refinements" of federalism.

Had Fraser studied carefully the history of the Constitutional Convention and its main documents, e.g., *The Federalist*, he might have avoided misunderstanding the relation between democracy and federalism, sovereignty and republicanism. Sovereignty cannot be discarded as "a monarchal residue," although its *legitimate* scope and foundation must be clearly spelled out. According to the original American constitutional model, this sovereignty did not extend beyond what is explicitly stipulated in the Constitution — unlike the opposite way the Constitution has been interpreted since the Civil War, i.e., as giving the federal government free reign over whatever is not specifically ruled out. Originally, the Constitution was meant primarily as a self-limiting *federal* document rather than the open-ended *national* license it has become, partly as a result of the inability to resolve its internal contradictions resulting from framing a federal system on democratic foundations ("We the people . . ." rather than "We the States . . . "). According to Hamilton: "Everything beyond this [the powers . . . delimited in the Constitution], must be left to the prudence and firmness of the people; who, as they will hold the scales in their own hands . . . will always take care to preserve the constitutional equilibrium between the General and State Governments."[10] The aim of the Constitutional Convention was only "at a partial Union or consolidation," and "the State Governments would clearly retain all the rights of sovereignty which they before had and which were not by that act *exclusively* delegated to the United States."[11]

For Hamilton, sovereignty is "a truth, which flows immediately and necessarily from the institution of a Fœderal Government,"[12] The act of establishing the Constitution, however, would "not be a national but a federal act." "Each state in ratifying the Constitution, is considered as a sovereign body independent of all others, and only to be bound by its own voluntary acts. In this relation, then the new Constitution will,

10. Alexander Hamilton, "The Federalist No. 31" (January 1, 1788), p. 198. Elsewhere Hamilton realizes that these limitations are far too stringent and that his call for broader ones conflicts with his general outlook, but he clearly has no idea concerning what to do about it. Cf. "The Federalist No. 23" *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151.

11. Alexander Hamilton, "The Federalist No. 32" (January 24, 1788), pp. 199-200. Hamilton also adds: "If the Fœderal Government should overpass the just bounds of its authority, and make a tyrannical use of its powers: the people whose creature it is must appeal to the standard they have formed, and take such measures to redress the injury done to the Constitution, as the exigency may suggest and prudence justify." Cf. Hamilton, "The Federalist No. 33" (January 2, 1788), *op. cit.*, p. 204.

12. Alexander Hamilton, "The Federalist No. 33," *op. cit.*, p. 207

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if established, be a federal and not a *national Constitution*."[13] In the final analysis, however, the Constitution ended up, as Madison thought it would, as neither a national nor a federal document, but a combination of both: "In its foundation, it is federal, not national: in the sources from which the ordinary powers of the Government are drawn, it is partly federal and partly national; in the operation of these powers, it is national, not federal: In the extent of them again, it is federal, not national; And finally, in the authoritative mode of introducing amendments, it is neither wholly federal nor wholly national."[14] No wonder it took a Civil War to resolve this issue!

Constitutional Inconsistencies and their Social Consequences

In the concluding section of his treatise on constitutional theory, Schmitt discussed the two major prototypes of federal constitutions, the US and the Swiss, as providing the surest means to guarantee territorial decentralization.[15] He pointed out that a federal constitution predicated on a democratic foundation, i.e., on the constituent power of the people rather than the sovereignty of the individual units, poses a particularly difficult constitutional problem since it puts the federation on the same level as the individual states, the only difference being at best quantitative. Since laws are ideally the codification of traditions and customs, unless the latter are collectively shared it is impossible to constitute any truly democratic unit on the communal, state or federal level. In a context of radical heterogeneity the protection of different nations or national minorities with divergent traditions and customs would result not only in the abrogation of the principle of nationality by transgressing particular traditions and customs, but also of the principle of the democratic state, since the latter could not possibly capture the will of its diverse citizens. Schmitt hints at a solution by suggesting that members of nations and minorities be dealt with on an individual rather than a collective basis: in terms of formal equality, freedom, property rights, etc. Such cultural homogenization allows for the kind of political unity without which it would be impossible to make political decisions as a state.[16]

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13. James Madison, "The Federalist No. 39" (January 16, 1788), *op. cit.*, p. 254.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
15. Carl Schmitt, *Verfassungslehre* (1928), Fifth Edition (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1970), pp. 388-391.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 389. Schmitt goes on to point out that in every true federal union the pluralism of units remains, rendering decisions difficult to make. This is the predicament of the Swiss Confederation, which has undergone nothing close to the statization that took place in the US and, as a result, has been paralyzed into a neutrality by default.

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This, however, is no solution, even if it worked until the late 1920s. Up to that point its full implications were not yet clear because the central government remained weak. The state-sponsored reduction of everyone to the level of abstract individuality by homogenizing everyday life to meet the requirements of the newly organized capitalism for standardized producers and consumers began only after WWI. It resulted in the culture industry, universal education and other socializing mechanisms to Americanize the population into an homogeneous whole. Hollywood and the New Deal came about in the 1930s to fill the cultural void created by this strategy, along with a massive bureaucratic apparatus to displace or replace residual cultural particularity. Culminating in Roosevelt's quixotic effort to pack the Supreme Court, this "jurisgenerative" project also destroyed whatever federal structures remained in its blatant attempt to turn the judiciary into a mere extension of an executive branch which, for all practical purposes, had already successfully absorbed all legislative functions. Far from being a recent radical innovation, "civil society" understood as the progressive corporatization of a hitherto heterogeneous and therefore bureaucratically unmanageable everyday life was the New Deal's strategy to complete the defederalization of the US Constitution, homogenize the population into its abstract producers/consumers common denominator, and motorize legislation to the point of empowering lawyers as its New Class shock troops.

Such an historically unprecedented deployment of identity logic could successfully rationalize a radically heterogeneous polity only as long as it met the kind of resistance that legitimated its rationalizing functions, i.e., only as long as organic populist communities remained sufficiently strong to function as viable adversaries. Over a period of little more than a generation, this logic worked itself out and began to generate the counter-finalities associated with contemporary motivation and rationality crises. At that point, the system's further rationalization and survival could only be guaranteed by supporting or artificially reconstituting that negativity and heterogeneity without which it could not regulate itself, thus risking the terminal involution of its communist other.

This could be the hour of a new populism, predicated on organic traditions and customs embodied in lived experiences never successfully homogenized, but only if this populism can manage to disentangle itself from the New Class-sponsored statist multiculturalism under which it is being bureaucratically subsumed. Quixotic attempts at recycling Montesquieu and "civil society" would be laughable were they not the collective delusion of so many New Class academics.

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The Causes of Disintegration in the USSR and Yugoslavia

Veljko Vujacic and Victor Zaslavsky

Recently there has been a dramatic resurgence of nationalism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. While nationalist politics plays a significant role even in relatively homogeneous countries, ethnic mobilization has reached unprecedented levels in multinational Communist states. Today two such states — the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia — have disintegrated, while a third — Czechoslovakia — is also experiencing a political identity crisis.

Seventy years after its formation, and forty-five years after its borders were "definitely" drawn following WWII, the Soviet Union has collapsed. Gorbachev's desperate attempt to promote a new union treaty through the March 1991 referendum failed. After the failure of the August 1991 *coup*, Baltic independence has been recognized internationally while several republics have added their names to the list of republics proclaiming political independence.

Analogously, seventy-two years after its creation on the ruins of the Ottoman and Hapsburg empires, and forty-five years after it was given its present boundaries by Tito's communists, Yugoslavia is in the midst of ethnic crises and civil war. In January 1990 the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) finally dissolved itself, long after it had become evident that it was no more than a collection of ethnic communist parties. In 1990, elections were held in all Yugoslav republics, yielding radically different outcomes. At the same time, the federal executive has attempted to carry out a comprehensive market reform, hoping to reintegrate the country on a new basis. Yet the full-scale civil

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war that has broken out since Slovenia and Croatia proclaimed their independence demonstrates the internal fragility of Yugoslavia. The impossibility of sustaining the Yugoslav federation has become so evident that even the European community, previously eager to support Yugoslav unity, is now close to recognizing Yugoslavia's disintegration as a *fait accompli*. This resurgence of nationalism is one of the most severe expressions of the general crisis of Soviet-type societies. In order to explain the present disintegration of the USSR and Yugoslavia, it is necessary to examine the main sources of political stability in post-Stalinist USSR and Yugoslavia.

Traditional Soviet and Yugoslav Nationality Policy

Despite the breakdown of the Second International in the wake of the failure of the parties of social democracy to subordinate nationalist goals to revolutionary class struggle, Marxism and nationalism are still seen as ideologically incompatible.[1] As is well known, the Bolsheviks' nationality policy was predicated on the assumption of the "transitory" nature of nationalism. Yet Lenin realized the political potential of nationalism in helping to overthrow the Tsarist government. While before the Revolution the Bolsheviks did not elaborate a clear nationality policy, the right of nations to self-determination became one of the central components of their political strategy. The successful manipulation of minority grievances helped bring about the Bolsheviks' victory in the 1917-1921 civil war.[2] The specter of the disintegration of the new Soviet state, however, soon forced the Bolsheviks to change their position. According to Stalin, the Bolshevik expert on the national question, the right of self-determination could be granted only to the "toilers" and not "the bourgeoisie."[3] At any rate, the formal "right to self-determination to the point of secession," which was enshrined in subsequent Soviet (and Yugoslav) constitutions, was never a serious option.

In the long run, a more significant concession to national sentiments

1. Thus, according to Connor, "nationalism is predicated on the assumption that the most fundamental divisions of humankind are the many vertical cleavages that divide people into ethnonational groups. Marxism, by contrast, rests upon the conviction that the most fundamental human divisions are horizontal class distinctions that cut across national groupings." See Walker Connor, *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 5. For a standard analysis of the affinities between Marxism-Leninism and nationalism, see Anthony Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1979), pp. 115-50.

2. Cf. Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, second revised edition, (New York: Atheneum, 1968).

3. Josef Stalin, *Sochineniya*, Vol. 4 (Moscow: Politizdat,1946), pp. 31-32.

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was federalism — a political form rejected by the Bolsheviks prior to the revolution. Soviet-style federalism was influenced by Stalin's definition of the "nation," which linked language, culture, ethnicity, territory and political administration.[4] The Soviet federation was seen as a collection of "sovereign" nation-states, controlled by a strong center. As such, it has not been considered a real federation, but a unitary state.[5]

Formal analyses of constitutional provisions pertaining to republican sovereignty, however, are inadequate since they overlook the *content* of Soviet nationality policies. The aim of Soviet federalism was not to regulate the sovereignty of republics *vis-à-vis* the center, but to accommodate nationalities within an all-Soviet framework composed of republics as units of centralized Party and state administration, cadre selection and central planning. This strict subordination makes the Soviet Union a unitary rather than a federal state. Similarly, the Soviet "Empire" cannot be seen as a mere "successor" of Imperial Russia[6] since this approach ends up overlooking the impact of Soviet nationality policy in institutionalizing ethnicity.

Soviet federalism organized ethnic groups into a complex hierarchy according to different levels of statehood from Union republics (15) with the highest degree of "self-regulation" to autonomous republics, autonomous provinces and national districts, down to non-territorial ethnicity. While republics hardly enjoyed significant autonomy, a policy of preferential treatment of "titular" nationalities was followed. This preferential treatment included a quota system favoring indigenous populations in higher education (established already in the 1920s), and in professional, managerial and administrative positions. This policy, also known as "cadre-nativization" (*korenizatsiya*) was a significant concession to national sentiments and during the Brezhnev period enabled the establishment of entrenched indigenous political elites whose local leverage could later allow political mobilization against the center.[7]

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4. See Josef Stalin, *Marxism and the National Question* (New York: International Publishers, 1942), p. 12. As Pipes has noted, "Soviet Russia thus became the first modern state to place the national principle at the base of its federal structure." Cf. Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

5. See Hugh Seton-Watson, *The New Imperialism* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1967). For a recent discussion of Soviet federalism, see Philip Goldman, "*Perestroika*: End or Beginning of Soviet Federalism?," in *Telos* 84 (Summer 1990), pp. 69-88.

6. Seton-Watson, *op. cit.* See also, e.g., Roman Szporluk, "The Imperial Legacy and the Soviet Nationalities," in Lubomir Hajda and Mark Beissinger, *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 1-24.

7. This has been emphasized by Alexander Motyl in *Sovietology, Nationality, Rationality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

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Another component of the policy of preferential treatment was the establishment of virtually identical educational, scientific and economic institutions in every republic. All Union republics have similar bureaucratic and educational structures, research institutes and Academies of Science, Unions of Writers, state publishing houses and the like. This policy of "structural isomorphism" appealed to ethnic middle classes — especially during periods of high social mobility characteristic of the "industrialization plus electrification" phase, but also later on, when the passing of educational advantages to the "heirs" was reinforced by the segregation of town and country. Thus the creation of "comprador" ethnic middle classes integrated nationalities within the Soviet framework and divided indigenous ethnic groups on the basis of residence.

Soviet nationality policy institutionalized ethnicity through the system of internal passports introduced in 1932. Besides elementary information concerning place of birth and residence, the passport contains entries for social origin and ethnicity. Since the late 1930s, this practice of registering nationality has turned ethnicity into an ascriptive social characteristic, since each newborn's ethnicity is determined by corresponding entries in the parents' passports. Only in cases of mixed marriages has it been legally possible to choose one's nationality. One of the unintended consequences of this policy has been ethnic homogenization in Union republics, since even in cases of mixed marriages children often choose to be members of the titular nationality in order to be eligible for preferential treatment.

Thus "titular nationality" became one of the most important criteria of social stratification. While in many cases this status was accorded to ethnic groups with a developed sense of nationhood, in others it was created by administrative fiat categorizing local populations according to central mandates. The main consequence of this policy was the establishment of an ethnic stratification system within Union republics, with minorities occupying a subordinate position.

The Yugoslav communists' prewar attitude towards Yugoslavia was as ambivalent as the Bolsheviks' to the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Tsarist Empire.[8] Only after the dismemberment of the country following the April 1941 Nazi invasion (and, more importantly, the German invasion of the Soviet Union) did the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (led by Tito since 1937) firmly endorse the rebuilding of the

8. Ivan Avakumovic, *History of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia* (Aberdeen: The Aberdeen University Press, 1964). See also Paul Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav Question* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 13-60.

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country within its old, or somewhat expanded, boundaries.

The Partisans' success in Yugoslavia was related to the communists' appeal to several, if not all, ethnic minorities, who were promised national "self-determination" after the war.[9] The communists promised to put an end to interwar "Greater Serbian Hegemony" and centralism, and the state was to be reorganized on a federal basis, according to the Soviet model. The 1946 Yugoslav constitution, based on the 1936 Stalinist institutionalization of federalism, divided the country into six republics, one autonomous province (Voivodina) and one autonomous region (Kossovo). Both autonomous sub-units were located within the largest republic — Serbia — and were designed to contain centralist Serbian aspirations. As in the Soviet Union, republican borders did not always reflect ethnic boundaries. At least one republic, Bosnia-Herzegovina, came about as a compromise between Serbs and Croats (the two largest ethnic groups) and did not have a clear titular nationality. Nevertheless, Yugoslav republics were designed as "homelands" for indigenous nationalities residing within them.

As in the Soviet Union, Yugoslav federalism was meant more to satisfy psychological needs for autonomous existence than to provide real sovereignty.[10] Until the mid-1960s, Yugoslavia remained a centralized state, controlled by the Party, with the help of the secret police. Subsequently, the linkage between territory, administration and ethnicity typical of the Soviet Union was replicated in Yugoslavia. Although the policy of "nativization" of cadres followed the Soviet pattern, in practice it could not be applied immediately after the war. The relative over-representation of Serbian and Montenegrin cadres in federal institutions, however, had more to do with the pattern of communist recruitment during wartime than with conscious nationalist biases.[11] The republics were in the hands of local cadres, and were to be increasingly treated as their real political power base. As in the Soviet Union, the policy of structural "isomorphism" associated with federalism appealed to ethnic middle classes who profited from high social mobility during the industrialization drive, came to "own" state apartments, and had a standard of living considerably higher than that of their peasant ancestors. In several cases, the new

9. R.V. Burks, *The Dynamics of Communism In Eastern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

10. According to Vucinich, "While officially described as a federal state, Yugoslavia resembles more closely a unitary state." See Wayne Vucinich, "Nationalism and Communism," in Vucinich, ed., *Contemporary Yugoslavia. Twenty Years of Socialist Experiment* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 253.

11. Shoup, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-22; Burks, *op. cit.*

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cultural institutions helped create local intelligentsias on an unprecedented scale, and ultimately fostered ethnic consciousness.[12]

By granting republics (not autonomous regions) more powers, Yugoslav nationality policy was more flexible than its Soviet counterpart. While there was preferential treatment according to social origin, there was no corresponding quota system for ethnic groups in educational institutions. Yugoslav communists did not impose strict proportionality in educational institutions, allowed for greater horizontal mobility, and did not turn nationality into an ascriptive "blood" trait.[13] In Yugoslav censi held every ten years, nationality or national minority status could be chosen freely (including the designations "Yugoslav" and "Moslem" — the latter introduced in the 1960s as a concession to Bosnian Moslems of Serb or Croat origin) and changes of nationality were not uncommon.

Yugoslavia never had anything like the Soviet internal passport system and, while the center controlled the labor allocations, since the mid-1960s workers could choose their place of employment.[14] Thus interethnic boundaries were not rigidly drawn as in the Soviet Union. The failure of collectivization after the war and the lack of an internal passport system preserved traditional peasant society and enabled it to integrate better with its urban counterpart. Another similarity between Soviet and Yugoslav nationality policies was the respective regimes' commitment to the "equalization" of development among different federal units. From the very beginning, this "affirmative action" aspect

12. This is especially true in Macedonia, where a practically new "Macedonian" language was codified in the 1960s, and where Macedonian ethnic consciousness was deliberately fostered. Montenegrins, who had a separate state identity and tradition, but never an ethnic consciousness significantly different from Serbs, are more "ethnic" as a result of communist nationality policy. The same can be said of Bosnian Moslems, who had more of a distinct religious, but not necessarily ethnic, identity (since they are ethnically Serb or Croat by origin). See Shoup, *op. cit.*

13. Proportionality in local and federal government structures, however, was from the beginning a point of contention among republics, especially because of the predominance of Serbian and Montenegrin cadres. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the principle of "parity" was introduced in order to equalize republican representation in federal institutions. On the complex inter-republican debate which led to the adoption of a new equalizing policy, see Steven Burg, *Conflict and Cohesion in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).

14. In addition, Yugoslav workers, once given passports, emigrated *en masse* to Western Europe during the mid-1960s. The recognition of the inevitability of unemployment and its tremendous social costs motivated Yugoslav communists to give passports to their citizens — a move which postponed social (and ethnic) explosions. Not only did Yugoslavia avoid the shock of mass "proletarianization" and unemployment, but the income generated by the *Gastarbeiter* in West European countries frequently raised the standards of living of their families in Yugoslavia.

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of the nationality policy depended on the ability of a strong central state to allocate huge investments to undeveloped regions, or redistribute income through transfer payments from wealthier republics.

Investment and redistributive patterns never succeed fully in their objectives — even within centralized Soviet-type economies. In general, however, poorer republics have had higher rates of investment, while no republic has fared consistently better or worse in the competition for state investment.[15] The "equalization" policy thus contributed to integrating ethnicity, especially in traditionally backward areas. This policy failed in the Soviet Union: the relative ranking of republics in terms of different development indicators has never changed significantly. This has nothing to do with the unwilligness of Soviet leaders to support undeveloped regions, but with the general failures of centrally planned economies, wasteful exploitation of resources, low labor productivity in undeveloped republics, and especially the demographic explosion in traditionally Moslem regions.[16]

Despite its greater flexibility and earlier attempts at reform, the Yugoslav regime was also committed to a policy of equalization. Immediately after WWII ambitious plans were drawn for the development of poorer republics such as Montenegro, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The 1948 Soviet-Yugoslav split accounts for some exceptions to this practice.[17] Later in the consolidation of Yugoslav communism, however, significant aid was extended to lesser developed regions without the desired results. This failure has to do with low labor productivity, a "no strings attached" grant-in-aid policy and, in the case of Kossovo at least, high population growth. In Yugoslavia's more decentralized system this has been a result of local party bosses' desire to foster republican

15. Stephen White, "The Supreme Soviet and Budgetary Policy in the USSR," *British Journal of Political Science* (1982), pp. 75-94. Donna Barry, *Outside Moscow. Power, Politics, and Budgetary Policy in the Soviet Republics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).

16. A comparison of educational attainment in different republics reveals the continued commitment of the Soviet regime to "equalization." While Russians, Georgians, Armenians and Jews have consistently attained higher educational levels than other ethnic groups, it might come as a surprise to learn that the educational attainment of urban workers in Central Asia exceeds the national average for the same category. Cf. Gertrude E. Schroeder, "Social and Economic Aspects of the Nationality Problem," in Robert Conquest, ed., *The Last Empire* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institutions Press, 1986), pp. 290-314.

17. The need to build strategic military industries away from Warsaw Pact borders favored Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, while efforts to increase trade with the West favored more developed regions — especially Slovenia. Thus between 1947 and 1963 Slovenia received three times more *per capita* investment than Kossovo. See Fred Singleton and Bernard Carter, *The Economy of Yugoslavia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), p. 220.

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economic autarchy and, therefore, a stronger political base.[18]

As in the Soviet Union, the equalization policy was most successful in culture. The promotion of local languages, the establishment of republican cultural institutions, and a general improvement in social services such as schooling and public health have contributed to the growth of an indigenous class of experts. As long as extensive economic growth and foreign credits could sustain such a policy, it helped coopt ethnic middle classes. One of the more harmful unintended consequences, however, has been the overproduction of experts which the more market-oriented Yugoslav economy could not absorb.[19]

In addition to the divisive aspects of the internal passport system, ethnic conflicts were encouraged by Soviet federalism, which divided nationalities according to levels of statehood, differentially distributing "ethnic rewards." The arbitrary drawing of borders, especially in Central Asia, helped prevent "supra-ethnic" religious opposition to the regime and pitted ethnic groups against each other. Finally, the rigid barriers between town and country, a consequence of collectivization and the denial of passports to collective farmers, segregated ethnic groups internally, according to "class" and territory, undermining collective action.[20]

Although it did not measure up to Stalinist standards, the role of terror in the "pacification" of nationalist forces after Yugoslavia's bloody civil war should not be underestimated. The Bleiburg massacres, the persecution of the Catholic Church, the liquidation of Serbian Chetniks, and the indiscriminate killing of civilians for "collaboration" or simply resistance to communist policies anywhere were integral parts of the consolidation of communist power in Yugoslavia. In a later, more "liberal" phase, coercion was applied selectively against local nationalist movements threatening the country's territorial integrity (Croatia, 1970-71; Kossovo,1981).

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18. Since the 1960s the question of so-called "political factories" has given rise to debates among economists with respect to their relative contribution to economic inefficiency in Yugoslavia. See Dennison Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment, 1948-1974* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977).

19. Danilo Mrksic, *Srednji Slojeki u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade: IPS, SSO Srbije, 1987). These integrative features of Soviet and Yugoslav nationality policy were the other, nonrepressive side of the "*divide et impera*" strategies of ruling communist parties. They should not detract from the effects of Stalinist terror in virtually all Soviet republics, the purges of local party cadres, the resettlement and extermination of ethnic populations accused of collaboration with occupying forces, the forcible incorporation of the Baltic states, the Ukrainian genocide etc., which are historically unprecedented. The Soviet coercive apparatus continued to maintain internal stability, even after the death of Stalin.

20. For the relation between class, territorial and ethnic stratification, see Victor Zaslavsky, *The Neo-Stalinist State* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1982).

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As Pavlowitch has pointed out, the communist party "put into practice a policy aimed at balancing out nationalities against each other. It looked to the peripheral groups to weaken the central ones, particularly the Serbs and the Croats, whom it wanted to equalize."[21] While such a policy was designed to integrate minorities unrecognized by the pre-war regime, it also reinforced centrifugal tendencies by proliferating "ethnic" groups. The unregulated status of minorities within republics became another major problem. Was Croatia, with its large Serbian minority, a state of the Croatian people or a multinational republic? Was Serbia, with its large Albanian minority, an ethnically Serb territory or a multinational republic? These questions were never constitutionally resolved and eventually precipitated civil war.

The Failure of the Communist Nationality Policy in Yugoslavia

The crisis of the nationality policy began in the 1960s. The 1948 Soviet-Yugoslav split encouraged Yugoslav reforms.[22] The removal of the *de facto* head of internal security, Aleksandar Rankovic, after a prolonged struggle between reform-minded leaders in republics such as Slovenia and Croatia, and Rankovic's Serbian political base,[23] closed the Stalinist phase of Yugoslav communism. The dispute between reformers and centralizers concerned the allocation of investment funds and credits to underdeveloped regions. The inefficiency of these investments provoked resentment in Slovenia and Croatia, whose leaders advocated greater decentralization and economic reforms. The triumph of the "reformist coalition" meant a significant devolution of political authority, the transformation of a hitherto unitary state into a more federal one, and a commitment to economic reforms — all under the auspices of the League of Communists.

In the late 1960s power shifted towards republican party leaders and the techno-managerial stratum interested in market-oriented reforms. This decentralization, however, did not "resolve" the national question. Republican leaders increasingly emphasized nationalist goals and sought the decentralization of remaining federal institutions. The challenge to the political center did not come only from Slovenia

21. Steven Pavlowitch, *The Improbable Survivor. Yugoslavia and its Problems* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1988), p. 71.

22. Cf. Rusinow, *op. cit.* For the complicated constitutional developments, see Steven Burg, *op. cit.* For a different approach, see Pedro Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1963-1983* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

23. Paul Lendvai, *Eagles in Cobwebs. Nationalism and Communism in the Balkans* (New York: Anchor Books, 1969).

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and Croatia, but also from reform-minded Serbian leaders. At the same time, grievances against the economic predominance of the center remained, especially in Croatia, where Belgrade central banks and monopolistic export-import firms were seen as expropriating "Croatian" wealth.[24] The 1971 Croatian crisis spelled the end of the Yugoslav equivalent of *perestroika*. The center, however, held. The purge of regional leaders in Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia and their replacement by cadres personally loyal to Tito meant the end of the short-lived Yugoslav experiment.

This dramatic "resolution" of the crisis indicated the propensity of local communist leaders to use decentralization to build strong ethnic constituencies, which would eventually displace them under "more democratic" conditions — as eventually happened in a number of Yugoslav republics. Similarly, economic reforms demonstrated the failure of traditional "equalization" policies, which exacerbated tensions between the more and less developed republics and revealed the ultimate incompatiblity of their economic interests. In short, the less developed republics were "natural" supporters of the regime's redistribution policies, while Croatia, Slovenia and Voivodina had every reason to oppose them. Consequently, any market reform supported by the federal center could be undermined by strong regional leaders pursuing incompatible goals. Furthermore, the association of ethnicity, territory, language and administration had resulted in the creation of preconditions for independent statehood: constitutionally-guaranteed political, economic and cultural sovereignty. In Yugoslavia's more decentralized system this process unfolded earlier than in the Soviet Union.[25]

Were market reforms incompatible with preserving territorial integrity? In the early 1970s strong leaders, backed by Tito's personal authority, could have undertaken market reforms. In this respect, Yugoslavia can be compared with Franco's Spain, which at that time was at a similar level of development. A transition to a more democratic system with a strong center and committed to economic prosperity may have been possible. The very logic of communist regimes, however, militated against such a solution. Instead of an authoritarian market-oriented regime, the "solution" to Yugoslavia's ethnic crisis took a different form. The Party center reestablished its power with the help of the military and then constitutionally destroyed the remaining powers of federal bodies. During the

24. Cf. Rusinow, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-50, and Ramet, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-07.

25. Cf. Juan Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, eds., *Handbook of Political Science* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), Vol. 3, pp. 336-50.

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1970s, the country was turned into a loose, albeit Party-dominated confederation increasingly dependent on Tito's personal authority.[26] At the same time, the seeds of economic reform planted during the late 1960s were effectively destroyed with the imposition of a self-management "economy by agreement" which bureaucratically overburdened enterprises and disempowered the emerging "managerial class."

These policies were catastrophic.[27] The increasing dependence of the Yugoslav economy on foreign credits was followed by chronic misinvestment and growing corruption in the ruling apparatus. At the same time, concessions to ethnic elites undermined the federal center's capacity to act as an autonomous agent — a consequence all too obvious today, when the federal prime minister, Ante Markovic, arguably Yugoslavia's first genuine market-reformer, is paralyzed by "unruly" republics.

The failure of traditional nationality policies became clear in the predominantly Albanian province of Kossovo in 1981. The most underdeveloped region in Yugoslavia, Kossovo received disproportionate amounts of federal aid during the 1970s in the attempt to integrate the Albanian minority into the Slavic state. Albanian was made the province's official language, local cadres were promoted, and a self-conscious national intelligentsia was trained at Prishtina University. Even by hypertrophied Yugoslav standards, Prishtina University was enormous: in 1981 it already had 26,000 students, and today it has more students than any other Yugoslav university.[28] At the same time, Kossovo experienced a demographic boom: with a 2.5% annual growth rate, Yugoslavia's Albanians are the fastest growing European population.[29] Since Yugoslavia abandoned Soviet-style full employment policies, a growing number of university graduates could not find work, despite the federal allocation of not always wisely invested resources. The emergence of a growing and dissatisfied nationalist intelligentsia operating within an awakening traditional society (with low female employment and large families) could only lead to a nationalist explosion — especially since by the mid-1980s Serbs represented only a shrinking 10% of the province's population. Rapid economic decline in the 1980s resulted in a curtailment of equalization policies and thus intensified ethnic mobilization.

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26. Ramet compares the relations among contending Yugoslav republics to those of sovereign states in the international system. See Ramet, *op. cit.* Rusinow, *op. cit.*, speaks of the confederalization of the Yugoslav polity during the 1970s.
27. Paul Shoup, "Crisis and Reform in Yugoslavia," in *Telos* 79 (Spring 1989), pp. 129-47.
28. See Branko Horvat, *Kosovsko pitanje* (Zagreb: Globus, 1989), 2nd edition, p. 137.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 182-84.

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The Kossovo crisis provoked ethnic counter-mobilization by the Serbian population — a process encouraged by Serbia's authoritarian new leader Slobodan Milosevic, who had come to power in 1987. Milosevic's unprecedented mobilization drive resulted in the subordination of the autonomous provinces of Kossovo and Voivodina to Serbia and in the abandonment of traditional nationality policy. This changed the ethnic balance in the Yugoslav federation and provoked ethnic counter-mobilization elsewhere, notably in Croatia and Slovenia.[30] Under these conditions, democratization in the 1990s could only result in further nationalist mobilization. Different electoral outcomes in various Yugoslav republics testify to the preponderance of nationalist parties. The triumph of anti-communist parties in Slovenia and right-wing nationalists in Croatia, however, is in stark contrast with the predominance of communists (now "socialists") in Serbia, who cling to such vestiges of the *ancièn régime* as the federal military. Divergent electoral outcomes enhance political and economic differences among republics, lowering internal cohesion. The electoral failure of the only genuine all-Yugoslav party (The Alliance of Reform Forces) formed in 1990 by Markovic, intensifies the paralysis of the federal center.

The Yugoslav crisis has its structural roots in the communist nationality policy. This policy integrated nationalities during rapid industrialization and extensive economic growth, but generated ethnic mobilization with the economic collapse in the 1980s, the institutionalization of "ethnic power" in the republics and the inability of the federal center to carry out comprehensive reforms. Ethnic homogenization in the republics was further fostered by little internal migration. When such migration occurred, it usually further homogenized the republics' ethnic composition.[31] Recent trade "wars" between Yugoslav republics (Serbia vs. Slovenia, Serbia vs. Croatia) have also undermined the unity of the Yugoslav market and obstructed federal reforms.

Current ethnic mobilization makes it impossible for market reforms to be carried out on the federal level. At any rate, the federal government does not have the authority and legitimacy to carry out these reforms. The simultaneous pursuit of marketization and democratization creates serious problems even in ethnically homogeneous East European states. In multinational countries, it is resulting in disintegration.[32]

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30. An analysis of the responsibility of Milosevic's regime for increasing ethnic polarization in Yugoslavia is beyond the scope of this article.
31. Singleton and Carter, *op. cit.*, pp. 226-29.
32. There is no guarantee that market reforms will be consistently pursued on the

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Soviet Nationalities under Gorbachev

The long history of Yugoslav disintegration has no parallel in the USSR. There were nationalist movements and ethnic activists during Brezhnev's tenure, but the overwhelming coercive apparatus prevented large-scale ethnic mobilization.[33] At the same time, however, local Party elites enjoyed more independence and, in the lesser developed republics (Central Asia), strong fiefdoms were established by ambitious Party leaders. Under more democratic conditions, the increased local power of republican elites could have been used against the political center. It is not surprising, therefore, that the advent of reformist leaders has led to growing ethnic assertiveness and mobilization. The reformers' commitment to *glasnost*, accompanied by an ideological attack on the Brezhnevite center, and the general liberalization of society with the introduction of competitive elections, discredited the coercive apparatus and discouraged the use of force in regulating social conflicts.

The most dramatic case of recent ethnic mobilization has been the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. In both republics, ethnic mobilization was first carried out by local communist leaders, and later by new popular fronts. A similar mobilization has also been underway in the Baltic states, Georgia, Moldavia and the Ukraine. Thus the sheer number and intensity of ethnic conflicts had become the reformist leaders' major problem even before the attempted *coup* that has ultimately accelerated the process of Soviet disintegration.[34]

The present Soviet crisis is also rooted in the failure of traditional nationality policies. As a multiethnic empire, the USSR was relatively stable during extensive economic growth when resources were abundant and massive coercion insured social control. But this internal stability cannot be guaranteed during rapid economic decline and political reforms, when it is no longer possible to create jobs for ethnic middle classes by expanding local bureaucracies and subsidizing cultural organizations and educational institutions. Sharp differences between republics in

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republican level, even under conditions of complete independence. Since national sovereignty is the primary goal of republican leaderships, many of them will attempt to further statize their economies, as has already happened in communist-dominated Serbia and nationalist-minded Croatia. An additional factor working against marketization is the propensity of newly elected national parties to treat their economies as a source of taxation in order to preserve social peace through redistribution.

33. Ludmilla Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1985).

34. For a more detailed analysis, see Victor Zaslavsky, *Das russische Imperium unter Gorbatschow. Seine ethnische Struktur und ihre Zukunft* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1991).

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terms of development, natural resources, labor supplies, demography and other indicators, intensify pressures on the central government.

Similarly, the nationality policy has fostered both ethnic segregation and homogenization. The relatively low level of inter-republican economic ties in the Soviet economy also contributed to these trends. In recent years, ethnic homogenization has been accelerated by "involuntary ethnic transfers" of populations.[35] Ethnic homogenization, voluntary or involuntary, bodes ill for Soviet territorial integrity, since it reduces inter-republican communication and favors nation-building processes.

Nationalist mobilization has been further enhanced by relatively low "structural differentiation" in Soviet society. Soviet middle and working classes are different from their counterparts in the West. The lack of a cosmopolitan bourgeoisie able to transcend ethnic divisions in the name of common economic interests within independent political organizations lowers social cohesion. The dependence of Soviet managers on the center and the overgrown military-industrial complex inhibits direct inter-republican communication. Neither can the working class easily transcend ethnic divisions, despite attempts to form trade union federations cutting across ethnic boundaries.

Gorbachev's reforms have revealed two major faultlines. The first runs between Baltic "states" and Slavic republics; the second divides the Southern, predominantly Moslem republics from the rest. Baltic nationalisms are typical secessionist movements predicated on ethnic survival and economic interests. Baltic peoples have reason to believe that their forcible incorporation into the USSR cut them off from the world market and contributed to their economic decline through forced subsidies of the inefficient Soviet center. In addition, declining birth rates of Baltic peoples (with the exception of Catholic and agricultural Lithuania), combined with the immigration of Russians threatens ethnic survival. Consecutive Soviet censi reveal the declining proportions of Estonians and Latvians in their republics.[36] Strong cultural traditions, the memory of independent statehood and the brutality of Stalin's terror, coupled with the weakness of the center, intensify secessionist claims.

The formation of Popular Fronts in the Baltic states resulted in rapid

35. The long-term consequences of the flight of hundreds of thousands of Armenians from Azerbaijan, and similar numbers of Azeris from Armenia, the growth in the return-migration of Russians from non-Russian republics, are yet to be felt. See Ann Sheehy, *Radio Liberty*, "1989 Census on Internal Migration in the USSR," *Report on the USSR*, Vol. 1, No. 45 (1989).

36. Thus the proportion of Estonians within Estonia fell from 75% in 1959 to 61% in 1989, with the corresponding figures for Latvians being 62% and 52%.

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nationalist mobilization. Engaging hundreds of thousands of people, the Popular Fronts became the first mass political organizations outside Party control in Soviet history. Their initial demands, from greater economic decentralization and republican self-accounting (*khozraschet*) to the blockage of environmentally unsafe projects, did not necessarily threaten the USSR's territorial integrity. The triumph of Popular Front candidates in freely contested elections, however, resulting in a progressive radicalization of nationalist demands, followed by declarations of republican sovereignty, called for the introduction of republican citizenship, and ultimately, independence from the USSR.

Nationalist movements in the Baltics are more than "normal" secessionist movements which, as such, have failed to receive significant international support since WWII.[37] Baltic states, however, may be an exception, since their forcible incorporation into the USSR has never been recognized by Western countries. While the economic unviability of the three independent Baltic states is a serious hindrance to full independence, their geographic position and cultural ties to Scandinavian countries, Germany and, ultimately, the European community may provide an alternative to the current exclusive dependence on the USSR.

In stark contrast to the Baltics, and contrary to predictions of a rise of pan-Islamic movements against the center, ethnic mobilization in Central Asia lacks secessionist interests. In these republics ethnic activism takes the form of periodic pogroms against any identifiable ethnic minority able to play the role of scapegoat. The success of Soviet nationality policy in pitting Central Asian ethnic groups against each other has been confirmed by the clashes between Tajiks and Uzbeks, Uzbeks and Meshketian Turks, etc. At the same time, local intelligentsias have failed to elaborate clear nationalist or pan-Islamic programs.

The current state of Central Asia testifies to the failure of both traditional nationality policy and the centralized Soviet economy. While these republics have had more than their share of investment,[38] their relative position with respect to the better developed republics has not changed. A consistently low and even declining labor productivity,[39] combined

37. According to Crawford Young: "With few exceptions, the international arena has been resolutely hostile to the fragmentation of its components. Secessionists in the postwar epoch have elicited an icy response in their search for external support." See *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), p. 81.

38. Between 1971-75 and 1981-85 total nationwide investment rose by 49.8%, while that of Uzbekistan rose by 64.9% and Azerbaijan by 95.6%. See *Narodnoe khozyyaistvo za 70 let* (Moscow: Statistika, 1987).

39. During the first half of the 1980s, Tajikistan registered no growth in labor

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with lack of a regionally differentiated economic policy and a demographic explosion have offset the potential impact of the Soviet regime's "affirmative action" policies.[40] Under these conditions, Central Asian republics are heavily dependent on the central state's investments and transfer payments. The local intelligentsia's very existence depends on the latter. Fearing the reaction of their communities, they reject any proposal for fertility control programs. Well-known environmental disasters in different parts of Central Asia, have produced a demographic catastrophe which only reinforces their reluctance.

Thus the positive vote for Gorbachev's union referendum cannot be explained only in terms of social control by local Party structures supported by mafia-type patronage networks, but has to do also with genuine interest in more economic support. The inability of the Soviet state during periods of economic decline and market transformation to deliver on its promises, coupled with growing unemployment, is likely to trigger a nationalist mobilization now conspicuously lacking.

Perestroika has also led to a remarkable revival of Russian national consciousness. The overlap between traditional Russian and "Soviet Imperial identity" has been a key feature of the 70-year old Soviet state.[41] The last two years of *perestroika*, however, have revealed a change in Russian national consciousness. Nationalist claims in the RSFSR are no longer the sole domain of traditional Soviet imperialist journals like *Molodaya Gvardiya* and *Nash Sovremennik*, Bolshevik nationalist groups like the "United Front of Workers of Russia" or newly emerging chauvinist societies like *Pamyat* and *Otechestvo*. On the contrary, these organizations' political influence seems to have declined, as can be surmised by the electoral defeat of almost all candidates from the "Patriotic Bloc."

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productivity, while in Turkmenia it actually declined. See *Sotsiologicheskie isledovaniya*, Vol. 2 (1988), p. 70.

40. Rapid population growth poses a special problem for Central Asia. Between 1959 and 1989 the population of the four Central Asian republics grew by 123% compared with 27% in the rest of the country. This means that the Central Asian population has doubled every twenty years, and that Soviet industrialization policies have not changed the urban-rural balance. On the contrary, more than 60% of the Central Asian population is rural, and the percentage is growing. High demographic growth has thus offset attempts to undermine traditional society.

41. See Motyl, *op. cit.*, chapter 11. Motyl even denies the existence of Russian nationalism, and speaks instead of Russian chauvinism and imperialism. Yet, "national" and "imperial" consciousness are not mutually exclusive. Thus, numerous historians of Germany have explored continuities between 19th-century German nationalism and 20th century German imperialism, pointing to the elective affinities between the two. Similarly, the whole history of Bonapartism in France indicates the connections between traditional French nationalism and France's *mission civilisatrice*.

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The growing intolerance and open hatred for Russians in many republics has not produced the expected backlash by most Russians. On the contrary, during the last two years there has been a proliferation of secessionist programs within Russia itself. A growing number of Russian intellectuals have realized that the departure of the most productive portion of the Soviet Union, the Baltic states, will increase the costs of maintaining the remaining "Empire." At a time when Russia itself is facing economic catastrophe, they argue, the Russian population cannot be made to bear the enormous costs of supporting the Central Asian republics with their growing populations. The prospect of a huge immigration of Central Asian workers into the Russian republic under market conditions can only strengthen separatist claims.

Russian intellectuals have realized the tremendous cultural costs Russians have borne with the merger of Russian and Soviet culture. Although the eradication of Russian traditions and national culture have been permanent themes in Solzhenitsyn's writings, a growing number of Russian liberal intellectuals such as Dimitrij Likhachev and other proponents of "Democratic Russia" have indicated similar concerns. The extraordinary attention paid to Solzhenitsyn's recent proposal for dismantling the Soviet Empire testifies to the strength of separatist feelings.[42]

The decisive division in Russia today is not between "national imperialists" (or "Empire-savers" as Szporluk calls them)[43] and the liberal Russian intelligentsia, but between liberal and "fundamentalist" Russian separatists. While both groups advocate Russian independence or a federation of Slavic republics, liberal Russian nationalists are firmly committed to the "Westernizing" path, while "fundamentalists" advocate a new Russian isolationism. The significance of these developments for Soviet nationality relations is obvious: the center's power base is severely damaged by the "Russians' betrayal."

Until recently, Gorbachev has been committed to the preservation of the USSR's territorial integrity. At the same time, several important concessions were made to the republics, notably in economic and financial self-accounting (republican *khozraschet*), and the introduction of republican citizenship. The "Platform of the CPSU" on the national question (1989) and the Proposal for a "New Union Treaty" were the two key documents of Gorbachev's nationality policy. According to the

42. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "Kak nam obustroit Rossiyu," in *Literaturnaya gazeta* (September 18, 1990).

43. See Roman Szporluk, "Dilemmas of Russian Nationalism," in *Problems of Communism* (July-August 1989).

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Platform, the political center would keep under its jurisdiction not only defense, security and foreign policy, but also "economic coordination, science and culture, the protection of individual rights, the promotion of integration processes and the organization of mutual assistance."[44] The center was to retain the power to formulate general political and economic policies. The Platform rejected the fragmentation of the Party and the army along ethnic lines, as well as any attempt to redraw republican borders.

The three days of the *coup* have destroyed Gorbachev's scenario for the future of the Soviet Union. The failure of the *coup* has opened the way for a real revolution which, like the 1989 East European revolutions, swept away all the foundations of the single-party regime. The era of Gorbachev, who tried to combine reformist tendencies and a coherent policy of *detente* with repeated compromises with the forces of the old regime, has come to an end. The Soviet empire has collapsed and new independent states and confederations are emerging on its territory.

Conclusion

The present Soviet and Yugoslav crises are a result of the failure of traditional nationality policies and of the collapse of communism. The unprecedented level of ethnic mobilization can be explained by the lack of alternative modes of collective action. The linkage between territory, language, administration and ethnicity, and the overlap between regional economic and ethnic interests create the preconditions for ethnic mobilization. Finally, inter-ethnic strife itself is a factor of ethnic homogenization in the republics, since it leads to ethnic population transfers.

The history of Yugoslav disintegration indicates that the decentralization of political authority is not a way out of the ethnic crisis. On the contrary, in Yugoslavia the decentralization of power has exacerbated centrifugal tendencies. In fact, Yugoslavia may count only on its weak "people's army" and the centralizing force of Serbian imperialism. In the Soviet case, the sheer numerical preponderance of Russians and the geographical and economic weight of the Russian republic is an additional factor of cohesion missing from Yugoslavia's more balanced "ethnic picture," in which Serbs represent only 38% of the population, and the Serbian Republic is not significantly larger than Croatia or Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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44. *Pravda* (September 24, 1989), p. 1.

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Yugoslavia exemplifies the difficulties associated with attempts to simultaneously pursue marketization and democratization of multinational Soviet-type societies. While marketization exacerbates tensions between more and less developed regions, democratization opens the political space for nationalist parties pursuing separatist goals. The consequent superimposition of economic, ethnic and political conflicts favors the disintegration of the state. Even if the federal center attempts to carry out genuine market reforms, as in Yugoslavia, it lacks the necessary legitimacy and support. Since a "cosmopolitan" bourgeois class does not yet exist, and the techno-managerial stratum is incapacitated by its dependence on local political elites, the federal center faces practically insurmountable difficulties in pursuing market reforms.

Yugoslavia also exemplifies the kinds of obstacles the Soviet Union will face if the present leaders attempt market reforms and full democratization on an all-Union level. Given the catastrophic state of the Soviet economy, the more complex Soviet ethnic picture, with more than one hundred nationalities, the number of territorial disputes, the more extreme character of Stalinist terror and its impact on national consciousness, nationalist political mobilization is likely to take even more extreme forms than in Yugoslavia. The coexistence within a federal context of Slavic and Central Asian populations, which dramatically differ in demographic behavior and industrial and political cultures, can be guaranteed only by the preservation of a strong central redistributive state. The requirements of a tight monetary policy and of budget allocations, however, will restrain the federal center from further pursuing traditional "affirmative action" policies towards underdeveloped regions.

Given the present level of inter-ethnic strife and nationalist mobilization in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, attempts to rebuild hitherto communist federations into more democratic ones are likely to meet stiff resistance on the part of local elites. A peaceful break-up of the USSR and Yugoslavia would facilitate democratization and marketization. National governments would enjoy more legitimacy in imposing austerity programs on local populations, and nationalism could serve as a legitimating ideology during the transition. Moreover, only strong national governments will be able to carry out policies of demographic control in under-developed areas such as Central Asia.

Similarly, local oppositions, often willing to sacrifice political goals for national independence, would have an opportunity to challenge hegemonic nationalist parties. The present Yugoslav crisis shows that

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moderate opposition parties both at the center and on the periphery are easy targets of extremist forces under conditions of inter-ethnic strife — a situation likely to change if "national sovereignty" is achieved. Linz has described the threats posed to democracy under conditions of ethnic polarization: "The interplay between a secessionist ultranationalist minority and moderate nationalist movements, accommodating parties at the center and extremist unitary parties at the center, imposes a heavy strain on the democratic state. The secessionist and unitary centralist minorities have an easy target in the moderates at the periphery and at the center, and their attempts to find compromise solutions will be considered illegitimate, if not treasonable, by the extremists."[45] This type of political dynamic has prevented the democratic transformation of the center (Serbia) and democratic consolidation in the semi-periphery (Croatia) in Yugoslavia. Ethnic polarization in the Soviet Union poses exactly the same or even greater problems for democratic transformation.

Those who have come to power after the coup's failure know well that they must act fast to exploit fully the defeat and disintegration of the monoparty system. Yeltsin's new nationality policy seeks both to guarantee the Soviet republics' right to self-determination and retain the country's "united economic space" by creating a kind of common market or Soviet Commonwealth. The government of the Russian republic has acknowledged the sovereignty and independence of the Baltic republics[46] which, at any rate, have already taken over control of their territory and borders. True to his conviction that Soviet territorial integrity is to be safeguarded at all costs, Gorbachev has called this decision "rushed and premature." But after a coup carried out by his close collaborators, the Soviet President has lost most of his international authority, while within the country his political base has been

45 Juan Linz "Crisis, Breakdown, Reequilibration," in Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, eds., *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), Vol. 1, p. 64.

46 On the other hand, the new rulers of the Russian republic have not rushed to accept the decisions of the Ukranian and Byelorussian parliaments to proclaim their independence. Clearly, these decisions have not yet matured within Ukranian and Byelorussian societies but, to a great extent, have been imposed by local conservative leaders who were initially ready to support the coup. After the coup's failure they seek to maintain their own power by exploiting nationalist sentiments. These efforts of the old *nomenklatura* to be more Catholic than the Pope and use the "weapon of independence in order to save the old regime, the Party and their property" have been denounced by many leaders of the democratic movement such as St. Petersburg's major, Anatoly Sobchak. Cf. *La Repubblica* (August 28, 1991), p. 3.

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practically destroyed. Thus his attempt to stall Baltic independence has been inconsequential.

A new temporary agreement concerning economic, political and military matters based on economic interest rather than coercion — something acceptable in principle even to the secessionist republics — could be the first step towards a pan-Soviet common market. Yet even the more optimistic Russian economists think that such a project will take at least five to ten years. In this context, it is essential to understand the role of nationalism in Soviet reforms as the only road out of the centralized economy and into the world market.

At any rate, the costs of disintegration are high. A violent break-up could lead to the establishment of a series of national states in permanent conflict over territory and resources. Furthermore, new national governments that come to power under conditions of ethnic polarization are unlikely to guarantee minority rights in their new states. Most likely, the first goal of such national governments — ethnic homogenization and state consolidation — will undermine their commitment to democracy. For this reason, the recognition of minority rights is the crucial test of the democratic commitment of emerging republican governments in Yugoslavia and in the former USSR.

There are good reasons to oppose ethnic discrimination in the new states. Continued ethnic strife can result in permanent political instability, create an unfavorable climate for foreign investment and undermine the integration of the new states into the world market. Similarly, inter-ethnic strife can result in a large refugee population in parts of the former USSR and Yugoslavia. The present state of ethnic relations, however, favors disintegration and the alteration of boundaries. This unprecedented situation calls for new solutions to old problems, perhaps in the form of new federal arrangements.[47] If the explosion of nationalism is the inevitable consequence of the nationality policies and of the collapse of centrally planned economies, every effort to salvage national unity and territorial integrity from outside is bound to fail. Thus support for a peaceful and controlled disintegration, accompanied by a shift to a market economy, is the best Western policy to protect the stability of the international order.

47. As this article was being completed (June 15, 1991), civil war broke out in Yugoslavia. The resulting military intervention in Slovenia and the Serbo-Croation regions of Croatia has destroyed the last remnants of the legitimacy of the federal state. While the ultimate political outcome of the conflict is uncertain, these events confirm our view that neither Yugoslavia nor the Soviet Union can survive the present ethnic crisis.

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The Intellectual in Uncivil Society: Michnik, Poland, and Community

John Michael

Dialogues of the Deaf

If Adam Michnik once exemplified the "post-totalitarian mind," he now represents the paradoxes of the situation in which that mind must think. His place in the Polish opposition has never been unproblematic. Often called "a great political and moral symbol" in the 1970s and 1980s — "the thinking person's Walesa" — his works have always provoked controversy.[1] Recently, however, his impact seems to be waning. If the politics of the "new" Poland that Michnik and Walesa helped create have tarnished Walesa's status as a great symbol, they have also left their mark on Michnik. More important, today's Poland is not a coherent society in which great moral or political symbols can exist. This is the post-communist postscript.

The current state of Polish society became apparent in last fall's presidential elections. In many ways Michnik's opposition to Walesa's candidacy continues the kind of opposition he has carried out over the

1. Jeffrey Goldfarb sees Michnik as the "theorist of post-totalitarian democracy." Cf. *Beyond Glasnost: The Post Totalitarian Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 142-57. Goldfarb's book is symptomatic of the many hopes that Western intellectuals attached to the rhetoric of "civil society" in the East — especially to the writings of opposition intellectuals. As a result, Goldfarb too easily labels the present situation in Poland as post-totalitarian, while Poland has never been simply "totalitarian" — even under Stalinism. He tends to simplify patterns of domination in the old system and overestimates the cohesiveness and civility of the movements that have replaced them. For a critique of the characterization of communist societies as totalitarian, see Paul Piccone, "Paradoxes of *Perestroika*," in *Telos* 84 (Summer 1990), pp. 3-32.

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past 15 years. He spoke for values he considered fundamental to the community and against those he saw threatening them. This time, however, his message was received differently. People seemed unwilling to hear him, and Michnik was effectively marginalized. It is generally agreed that his opposition to Walesa's candidacy and the attempts by *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Michnik's paper) to condemn the waves of nationalism and xenophobia that arose in the first round of elections did little to help Mazowiecki's campaign or counteract Polish anti-Semitism. What was perplexing was not that Michnik's vision of a community based on democracy, pluralism and European culture was controversial, but that it seemed out of place. During the election it was said in Warsaw that "Michnik lacks political culture" — which is surprising, because Michnik had for so long represented the hopes for a new, democratic political culture. Even more surprising is that, since the arrival of democracy and the push to modernize through marketization, Michnik's role as a central symbol has become questionable.

In 1980 Solidarity and "civil society" seemed to embody the old dream of struggling against oppression and of constituting an alternative to power politics based on an organic coalition between intellectuals and workers.[2] Michnik was the most important symbol for the intellectuals in that coalition. He stood for enlightened, humanistic values, spending years in Polish prisons rather than compromise his commitments and refusing the various deals and accommodations the authorities offered. In Western accounts, along with Jacek Kuron, Vaclav Havel, and George Konrad, he became known as a leading theorist of the "politics of anti-politics." Yet, without a repressive official order to insure its solidarity,

2. To speak of "civil society" and the coalition between workers and intellectuals in Solidarity is not to romanticize this moment nor to gloss over the fact that relations between the two groups were difficult from the start; mutual suspicion rather than harmonious cooperation was common. Goldfarb is perhaps the most determined spokesman for the romantic view of Solidarity. See *Beyond Glasnost*, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 131-42. Ost provides a more balanced account of civil society as an attempt to forge a third road between capitalism and communism, and argues that the coalition between workers and intellectuals — such as it was — was effectively terminated by marshal law. See David Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics: Opposition and Reform in Poland since 1968* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), pp. 19-31, 205-15. Relations between Solidarity's workers and its expert advisors were difficult from the beginning. See Jadwiga Staniskis, *Poland's Self-Limiting Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), and Alain Touraine, et. al., *Solidarity: Poland 1980-81* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For a participant's account of these relations during the negotiations of the Gdansk accords, see Tadeusz Kowalik, "Experts and the Working Group," in *The Birth of Solidarity: The Gdansk Negotiations, 1980*, trans. by A. Kemp-Welch (London: Macmillan, 1983), pp. 143-67.

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under the Mazowiecki government civil society dissolved into a corporate struggle between opposed interests. No longer powerless, anti-politics became politics in a more familiar form. Michnik's effectiveness in speaking for society's shared values diminished accordingly.

Ost constructs a hypothetical exchange: "In the spring of 1989, Adam Michnik, writing as the co-editor of Solidarity's new legal daily, proclaimed that 'a specter is haunting Europe': the specter of democratization. Andrzej Gwiazda [leader of The Working Group, a working class, anti-Walesa Solidarity faction] meanwhile invoked a different ghost: the 'specter of marketization'."[3] Michnik and Gwiazda were engaged in a dialogue of the deaf. Michnik's celebration of democracy has no intrinsic link to the rapid institution of market reforms about which Gwiazda and his fellow workers have serious reservations.[4] Michnik addresses the traditional concern of the "universal" intellectual, insisting that Poland's success must be measured in terms of the fundamental values of freedom, pluralism, tolerance and democracy. Gwiazda addresses the nuts and bolts of the economy, the sphere of specialized intellectuals and New Class planners like Balcerowicz. He speaks to the concrete interests of Polish workers who bear disproportionately the impact of market forces in the new society they had struggled to create. Michnik's concern with moral reform in society is increasingly blocked by questions of economic reform. Thus he has been criticized for having little to say about concrete problems, dissolving all issues into a genial haze of insubstantial pieties.[5] Yet he claims that these values are essential to any community. The strains of economic, technical and social transformation render problematic the intellectuals' appeal to universal values.[6] No social

3. Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 214. Ost also charts the shift from anti-politics to politics and the creation of a neo-corporatist state in Poland.

4. As has often been pointed out, especially in Eastern Europe, democracy and marketization can be at odds with each other. One possible explanation for Tyminski's solid 25% of the Polish electorate — and for a sizeable part of the anti-Mazowiecki vote — may be understood as a vote against the market reforms of the Balcerowicz plan. On the lack of any necessary linkage between democracy and the market, see Paul Piccone, "Paradoxes of *Perestroika*," *op. cit.*, p. 4. The relative independence of political, economic and cultural spheres cited in Daniel Bell's *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1976) is a fact of daily life in Eastern Europe.

5. For an early example, see Pawel Spiewak, "Klopot z Adamen Michnikiem" ["The Problem with Adam Michnik"] *Res Publica* (June 1990), pp. 89-93.

6. On the exhaustion of the role of universal (as opposed to specific) intellectuals in situations where the status of values is questionable and their relevance in doubt, see Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power," trans. by Colin Gordon, in *Power/Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), pp. 109-33. Here the traditional Marxist critique of civil society and liberal values as bourgeois apology is relevant but not decisive. Marx'

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groups can be indifferent to justice, tolerance or democracy. But there is a danger in assuming that all groups assign them equal weight or construct their significance the same way. As Bauman has argued, the postmodern situation is characterized by the recognition that universal values are not necessarily disinterested, absolute or effective.[7] This skepticism hinders intellectuals' ability to play the moralistic and proselytizing role that has been their higher calling since the advent of modernity. The recognition that values are contingent, however, does not render the universal intellectual's articulation of values illegitimate. The history of intellectuals attempting to impose their values on society (of which the Leninist state was only a recent example) warrants skepticism about the intellectual's role.[8] Most of all, the recognition that values are contingent alters the conditions within which intellectuals must work, and makes the relation between intellectuals and their communites precarious.

The recycling of the 19th-century concept of "civil society" offered the last hope for intellectuals to play the heroic Enlightenment role of agents of universal values. But as the dream of a civil society disintegrates and experts run the government while specific groups determine interests and needs, Michnik's general community of values disappears.[9] What role then can the intellectual play?

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dismissal of the particularity of civil society was possible only by contrasting it to the universality of a future proletarian order. In Poland today, workers represent a largely conservative rather than progressive force. Political debate centers not on the necessity of market reform, but on the speed with which reform can be enacted. Without a universality to discredit it, other means must be found to assess the particularity of any culture.

7. Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Intellectuals* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

8. Piccone, citing Carl Schmitt, notes "As one of the possible outcomes of a tired Enlightenment, Soviet communism can be . . . seen as the culmination of a long tradition of dictatorships beginning with 'the Enlightenment's educational dictatorship, philosophical Jacobinism, the tyranny of reason'," etc. "Paradoxes of *Perestroika*," *op. cit.*, p. 9 n. 12. See also Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 21-109, Jean-François Lyotard, *Tombeau de l'intellectuel et autres papiers* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984).

9. This raises the question concerning the minor role played by Balcerowicz's plan during the election. If marketization haunted Mazowiecki's campaign, Walesa offered little hope that he would exorcise the specter. In Walesa's cabinet, Balcerowicz has even more power than he had in Mazowiecki's. The first problem Walesa's administration ran into was finding a prime minister who could work within the limits Balcerowicz set. During the election, neither major candidate seriously addressed the increasing discontent with the costs of economic reforms. Very much in the American style, the election seemed to avoid specific issues. Stan Tyminski, by at least appearing to address the Balcerowicz plan and declaring himself against wholesale privatization, managed to tie down over 20% of the votes in both rounds of the election, despite being unknown and having appeared in the presence of several known ex-secret police officers. Perhaps for this reason, Michnik and other intellectuals seemed to have little to say when confronted

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The Intellectual as a Caricature of Himself

In August 1990 a Chodankowski cartoon of Michnik appeared in nearly every bookstore in Warsaw, likening him to Tadeusz Rejtan, the Polish Senator who refused to collaborate with the first partition of Poland in 1772. In a futile appeal to the patriotism of his senate colleagues, Rejtan threw himself on the floor of the Sejm, tore his clothes to bare his breast, and cried, "On the blood of Christ, I adjure you, do not play the part of Judas; kill me, stamp on me, but do not kill the Fatherland."[10] In the cartoon, Michnik stands erect, defying the unseen traitors to attack him, spreading his coat in a heroic gesture of defiance. Yet he appears as much a flasher as a martyr. He seems to represent nothing but his desire to draw attention to himself by assuming the shabby garments and outworn gestures of the past.

After the revolution the heroic intellectual, that Enlightenment anachronism, runs the risk of becoming a caricature of himself. The question is whether that risk can be avoided. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, which cloaks Michnik's figure in the cartoon, was the first independent, legally published, daily newspaper in Eastern Europe. In the beginning, the paper's independence guaranteed its ability to speak for the Solidarity movement whose emblem it bore. It was the voice of the independent civil society that the Polish opposition had created. When Walesa tried to fire Michnik the summer before the presidential election and forced him to remove Solidarity's logo from the paper, the meaning of the paper's "independence" changed. The civil society it was supposed to represent dissolved into contending factions.

In the first round of the Presidential election in November, Poles suspected that the newspaper was an organ of the Mazowiecki government, the Warsaw elite that composed it or "foreign interests" which many believed were secretly controlling or buying up Polish resources and national heritage. In an atavistic Polish response to crises, an alarming upsurge of anti-Semitism reappeared prior to the election. In this context, Michnik criticized Walesa's attempts to capitalize on this wave of nationalistic sentiment in his run against the Mazowiecki government. He appealed to his fellow Poles to embrace pluralism and reenter the West European democratic tradition.[11] Now, however, the very Poles Michnik

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by the surprising successes of Tyminski's strange campaign. It had little to do with the sorts of values for which general intellectuals speak, and much to do with the fear of economic dislocations brought about by the speed of reforms.

10. See Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, (New York: Columbia University Press/Oxford University Press, 1983), Vol. 1, p. 526.

11. On this topic see Adam Michnik, "The Two Faces of Europe," *New York Review of*

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Michnik needed to address (those whom fear, frustration and alienation from the government were turning to bigotry) often saw his statements as the plea of a specific interest group (intellectuals and the elite) or a disguise for a particular agenda (compromising Polish sovereignty or selling Poland to "Jewish" interests). Such nationalistic paranoia may be the pathological expression of an intensely frustrated people but, like racism in the US, it cannot be simply dismissed as a deviation from the more fundamental values of the larger community. Anti-Semitism remains the least attractive aspect of the populist politics in Poland. One must try to understand its significance without attempting to excuse it. In this instance, many Poles felt excluded from a government made up of Warsaw intellectuals. In Poland, anti-Semitism is sometimes a kind of anti-intellectualism and anti-elitism. Michnik — a Jewish intellectual who has always been in or near the inner circles of the Polish elite — becomes a lightening rod for popular discontent.

Though Michnik has sometimes assumed the romantic mantle of nationality and honor, the preferred costume of Poland's political elites since the partitions, his assumption of the intellectual's role has always been more complex than his critics admit. In 1979, warning the opposition against imposing self-righteous, moralistic judgments on others — in effect rejecting the grandiloquence of Rejtan's bared breast — Michnik characterized his general position as follows: "a movement that does not honor a society's constant values is not sufficiently mature to undertake the reshaping of that society."[12] Yet society's values and needs may not be intelligible to universal intellectuals. The intellectual may want to attack and reform, rather than defend, many of his society's values.

During his years in the opposition, Michnik spoke with a moral urgency that resonated with his audience.[13] He sought to turn the language of

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Books (July 19, 1990), p. 7; "After the Revolution," *Cardozo Law Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 1990), pp. 61-65; "Pourquoi je ne voterai pas Walesa," *Liberation* (November 5,1990), on the issue in general, see Timothy Garton Ash, "Eastern Europe: Apres le Deluge, Nous," in *New York Review of Books* (August 16, 1990), pp. 51-57. Michnik has sometimes been criticized for not speaking even more strongly against the anti-Semitic upsurge in Poland.

12. "Maggots and Angels," in Adam Michnik, *Letters from Prison and Other Essays*, trans. by Maya Latynski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 198.

13. In a letter written in prison during martial law, Michnik wrote: ". . . the underground today does not need the moral principles and organizational structures of an army or a party of the Leninist kind. What it needs is the bond of shared aims and solidarity in action. And respect for individuality. And consent for plurality. It seems to me that the underground should not promise a world devoid of conflict. I think that it should suggest a program of practical activity for reform, a program for social self-defense, contacts with real culture and cultural values, participation in authentic civic and intellectual life. Plus a pinch of dignity, a pinch of fraternity. And a daily breath of truth. Of the truth that every

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the Party-state against itself. Whereas the party posited the culture, values, and civic life it sponsored as the "authentic" antidote to the distortions and hypocrisy of the bourgeois order, he defended culture, civic life and truth itself against the party's lies.

It has often been remarked that Michnik's assumption of the intellectual's role comes in the wake of the Leninist party's failed attempt to transform "the enlightened scientific project of seeking objective truth . . . . into the political project of acting according to the truth in history as it [was] understood by an empowered elite."[14] Yet, if Michnik managed to express the democratic aspirations of leftist intellectuals in a form that appealed to an audience not limited to intellectuals, the problem of vanguardism and elites reappeared with his espousal of democratic principles. If elites are no longer empowered, what role can they play in the politics of their communities?

The Limits of Community

The strategy of anti-politics drew its lessons from the disaster of Leninism's imposition of the Enlightenment and, consequently, rejected the intellectual's legislative function. In terms Bauman has characterized as typical of the role intellectuals can play in the world,[15] Michnik's most

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compromise is temporary, that every political solution is illusory. Because, as a philosopher wrote, but for death, all solutions are illusory. This is what I think." Cf. Michnik, *Letters from Prison and Other Essays*, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

14. Jeffrey Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost*, *op. cit.* p. 89. On Leninism and modernism, see Russell Berman, *Modern Culture and Critical Theory: Art, Politics, and the Legacy of the Frankfurt School* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 190-91. On Leninism as the culmination of beliefs originating in the Enlightenment, see Keith Tester, "The Uses of Error: The Collapse of 'Really Existing Socialism'," in *Telos* 83 (Spring 1990), pp. 151-61. Ost suggests that the concrete situation of post-communist politics in Poland "might best be called a *postmodern left*," and he specifies the notorious ambiguities of this term by saying that "[w]hat made *this* left so original was that it had given up all the utopias radicals so often cling to." Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Goldfarb also suggests that post-modernist theory might contribute to an understanding of contemporary Poland, but his statement that post-modernists and their antagonists "have not self-consciously and directly confronted twentieth-century horrors," and have in fact swept "the facts of totalitarianism under the carpet, primarily through extreme theoretical abstraction" does not adequately describe post-modernist thought. Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost*, *op. cit.*, p. 200. Ost makes clear the conditions for the emergence of this non-utopian, post-modern Left in the disillusionment of critical intellectuals with the increasingly empty vanguardist pretensions of the Leninist party-state. Ost, *Solidarity*, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-54.

15. According to Bauman, what characterizes the post-modernist situation is the passing of intellectuals as an empowered elite of legislators. Today's "irreversible" pluralism defines the role of intellectuals as interpreters rather than legislators, and makes "communication across tradition . . . the major problem of our time." Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, *op. cit.*, p. 143. Bauman describes the situation of intellectuals and the tasks suited to

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effective stance has been as interpreter and not legislator for his community. However, the interpreter's role cannot be completely distinguished from legislative functions. In 1976 Michnik offered a formulation of the intellectual's place in civil society: "To offer solidarity with striking workers, with students holding a mass meeting, or with protesting intellectuals is to challenge the intraparty strategy of the revisionist and neopositivist policies of compromise. Social solidarity undermines the fundamental component of both strategies: acceptance of the government as the basic point of reference."[16] The point here is not so much that Michnik calls for solidarity with suffering, with the pragmatic necessity to choose between the executioner and the victims, but that this solidarity is also part of a strategy to contain the goals of the victims he mentions. The various forms of economic, moral and political value — demands for better living standards, free lectures, uncensored publications — must be redescribed as aspects of the creation of a single civil society separate from and independent of the official government. As a practical matter, the universality of that point of reference is its persuasive power.

The creation of this universal perspective of civil society, as Michnik saw it, is the task of intellectuals — though he knew it would take all social groups, especially non-intellectuals and workers, to make it more than a pipe dream.[17] His injunction against material profit is not a call to purity or renunciation for its own sake or to protect morals from devaluation by economic concerns. Its force is particular and pragmatic. Only those who have renounced rewards from the party-state will be believed when they speak out against it. This has to do with the fact that the

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their traditional skills: "In a nutshell, the proposed specialization boils down to the art of civilized conversation. This is, naturally, a kind of reaction to the permanent conflict of values for which the intellectuals, thanks to their discursive skills, are best prepared. To talk to people rather than fight them; to understand them rather than dismiss or annihilate them as mutants; to enhance one's own tradition by drawing freely on experience from other pools, rather than shutting it off from the traffic of ideas; that is what the intellectual's own tradition, constituted by ongoing discussions, prepares people to do well. And the art of civilized conversation is something the world needs badly. It may neglect such art only at its peril. Converse or perish." Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

16. Michnik, *Letters from Prison*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

17. As he wrote in 1976: "The intelligentsia's duty is to formulate alternative programs and defend the basic principles . . . . The direction that the ideological thinking of the young generation takes — as well as the drift of political change in Poland and in other countries of Eastern Europe — will depend on the convergence of these groups with the activities of the working class. When a free press and independent organizations do not exist, the moral and political responsibility of these groups is much greater than at any other time. The people of the opposition should renounce material profit and official esteem in order to fulfill this exceptional responsibility, so that we can expect the truth from them." Michnik, *Letters from Prison*, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

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intellectuals' work is largely rhetorical in nature. Michnik has long known this. His most effective work, *Letters from Prison and Other Essays*, is a series of brilliant, rhetorical *tours de force* where he takes on a charismatic mantel that evokes Mickiewicz's dream of seizing the "reins" of the nation's soul to lead it to its destined rebirth.

In the 1970s the Polish opposition needed a living rhetoric to replace the dead codes of official Marxism and revitalize political discourse.[18] Michnik rejected traditional Marxist-Leninism not because its tenets were false, but because in Poland the doctrine itself had ceased to arouse emotions or mobilize groups. It is the doctrine's rhetorical nullity that rendered it unfit for the reform-intellectual's tasks: "It is difficult to imagine a movement that would use Marxist-Leninist doctrine, or even any of its elements, to enforce reforms in Poland today, since this doctrine is a dead creature, an empty gesture, an official ritual. It no longer stimulates discussion or fires up emotions. It is incapable of causing internal tension and division."[19] As a rhetorician, Michnik knows the power of a language that lives in the hearts and minds of its intended audience. The sign that it still lives is not only that it can create accord, but also that it can foster division, conflict and tension. Redescription, as Rorty claims, is a task that tends to fall to intellectuals as professional polemicists.[20] But it is a task that often puts intellectuals at odds with the group they seek to influence and makes their performance a dangerous rhetorical act.

The language Michnik and other Polish intellectuals developed in the 1970s and used throughout the 1980s depended in large part on appeals to religious and ethical values: truths higher or more fundamental than those political calculations that determined the party-state's mandates.[21]

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18. See Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost*, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 3-33.

19. Michnik, *Letters from Prison*, *op. cit.*, p. 146. In 1981, on a similar theme, Michnik wrote: "To accept the wording used in the propaganda would have meant to acquiesce in lies in public life. The union had to speak a language that the people, whose trust is its strength and its weapon, could understand and agree with." *Ibid.*, p. 129.

20. Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

21. Michnik never seemed to simply idealize the society he sought to represent. On the Party-led anti-Semitic purges of 1968 that landed him in jail and caused many of his friends and colleagues to leave the country, Michnik wrote in a 1973 essay: "One could of course continue to claim that it was not the people but only those horrible communists, those monstrous rulers, who with their many voices roared, 'We want blood!' just as they had done in the era of the Stalinist trials. But I believe that to adhere to this idea is to mistake a hopeful illusion for reality: The fundamental difference between the years 1952, for example, and 1968 is that in 1968 the anti-intelligentsia and the anti-Semitic pogrom was conducted with the active consent of a significant segment of the population . . . Did there exist in Poland a tradition that justified these

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In a recent article, Michnik has reiterated this strategy.[22] He points out that its limits may now have been reached as "the great experiment of confrontation between the idea of politics based on the power of the powerless and a social reality that was shaped when politics was based on the power of the powerful" proceeds. But the problems faced here may be only partly attributed to lingering hatred. They may also have to do with the limits of culture, community and the intellectual's role in today's societies.

Michnik has argued that even the motives of those who apparently collaborate with an oppressive regime must be judged only with the greatest tolerance and without unambiguously attempting to separate people into "maggots and angels." He reminded his readers that sometimes it is difficult to decide who is who, and those who appear as maggots to others may appear as angels to themselves.[23] He sought to interpret one segment of society for another, to open lines of communication and understanding: to practice what Bauman, following Rorty, calls "the profession of civilized conversation." Yet here, at the heart of civility, problems of rhetoric and violence resurface.

As Bauman emphasizes, a community of shared values is required to engage in civilized conversation: "Community has come to replace reason and universal truth, and the one method leading to both. It is in community, rather than in the universal progress of mankind, that

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convictions? Did the Knights of Darkness and Ignorance who believed themselves to be the only Poles worthy of that name have a tradition to claim? Had there been others in Poland before them who used their participation in anti-Semitic pogroms as a source of national pride?" *Letters from Prison*, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

22. "Politics and ethics belong to different worlds. Yet we, the men and the women of the anti-totalitarian opposition movements, have a different view of politics, and of our participation in it. The politics of those totalitarian regimes was, after all, an open attack on ourselves, on our freedom, on our dignity, on truth. The elementary reflex of defending those elementary values entangled us in politics, transformed people of culture into people of politics. Thus there was born the phenomenon of an artist or humanist occupying the center of the political stage in our part of Europe. Thus there was created the political idea of building civil societies outside the totalitarian state . . ., what George Konrad has called anti-political politics, what Vaclav Havel has described as politics based on the power of the powerless." Cf. Michnik, "After the Revolution," *op. cit.*, p. 61.

23. As important as it is to judge, it is also important to understand, though he offered the following qualification: "I am no insane aesthete. I don't believe that all people can be well disposed toward one another all the time. But I do believe in the creative power of our actions. I do believe that we are capable of enhancing or diminishing the amount of hatred and intolerance in our public life. Finally, I believe that the form of an independent and democratic Poland is being shaped today. I would like that Poland to be based on tolerance and political culture, although I know that long years of work will be necessary to popularize these values." Michnik, *Letters from Prison*, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-97.

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the intellectuals of the West tend to seek the secure foundations of their professional role." Michnik knows this.[24] The strategy of creating a civil society in opposition to the official life of the state may be seen as an attempt to create a community of values in which, above all, the language of values could form a reliable basis for understanding. The very visibility of the pragmatic link between community and communication reveals that community itself rather than being the answer to the intellectual's problem is, in fact, the name of it: "The erosion of the universal ascendancy of the setting within which the Western intellectual tradition developed and took shape exposed the previously invisible link between the pragmatic validity of such tradition and the commonality of the 'form of life' or the 'community of meanings.' The question is, however, how large is the community? Whom does it entail? Where should its boundaries be drawn?"[25] These are pragmatic rather than metaphysical questions. They determine one's place and one's audience. These are the questions that Michnik has confronted for the last fifteen years and to which, until recently, he was usually able to formulate effective responses. That his answers no longer reach the same audience suggests the deterioration of the community he and Solidarity struggled to establish. In this sense, his situation has become more, rather than less, like that of Western intellectuals.

Yet in Poland the problem retains its specific Polish cast. One problem Polish intellectuals now face is the monopoly of values presently enjoyed by the Catholic Church. Most recently, the Church has brought its authority to bear on the question of abortion. While opinion polls suggest that 65% of Poles oppose laws making all abortions illegal, the Church presses hard for such measures. Its techniques often recall those of the old party-state: threats to withhold sacraments, opposition to consultations between the government and public opinion, claims to represent a higher morality than democracy or the will of the people might embody, attempts to capitalize on xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other fears. In the 1970s Michnik wrote a book seeking a dialogue between the Church

24. In 1976 Michnik wrote that the aims of the opposition "should be not only — or perhaps even not mainly — a legal and institutional structure, but above all a real community of free individuals, created anew each day." Michnik, quoted in Ost, *Solidarity*, *op. cit.*, p. 72. Cf. also Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

25. Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, *op. cit.*, p. 146. Samuel Weber notes: "Whenever the codes and conditions that have assured the consensus necessary for communication begin to change radically or to break down, attention is inevitably drawn to the question of institutions." As such, the issue of communities is an aspect of the question of institutions. *Institution and Interpretation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 33.

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and Left. Since then, however, he has been strangely silent on the relation between the Church's power in post-communist Poland and the values he has always advocated. Yet, if Michnik hopes to create a democratic community, he must at some point speak out against the Church's authoritarian influence. Here the problem that intellectuals have performing the interpretive function that Bauman and Rorty describe for them becomes clear. The intellectual must feel compelled at times to lay down the law, to draw a boundary that will define the limits of solidarity and put him in opposition to his community. To understand is not necessarily to condone; and the difference between an interpretation and a judgment can be difficult to ascertain.

The Silence that Yawns Within

Addressing an audience of Western intellectuals in 1990 about the dangerous situation in Poland before last Fall's elections, Michnik wrote: "An intellectual is pretty helpless in the face of these dangers: as a man faithful to the ethical origin of his commitment he knows that he must abide by the truth. That is how we are, divided in two. We know how fragile are the bases of democratic order in Poland, and we know that to denounce continuously the slippages in our democracy will make it even more fragile. We face, in these circumstances, a peculiar conflict of loyalties. What is more important, we ask ourselves, the fragile democratic order or the defenseless truth? None of us has the answer to the question of which of these two loyalties should prevail. We are doomed to inconsistency. We are doomed to live in a state of tension, uncertainty, permanent risk."[26] He finds himself caught in complexities of doubt and certainty which might be analyzed in terms of pragmatism and principle, political speculation and ethical conviction, the need to comprehend and embrace the emerging order and the desire to denounce and reject its failings. He evokes the conflicts within the intellectual's role, rendered more intense to the extent that they are less clear than he describes them in the previously quoted parallels, thus disguising the true confusion of the situation. Ethical principles do not remain unchanged by the situations in which they are enacted. If the promotion of democracy and tolerance are principles for which the intellectual would act, his fidelity to those principles may, if performed imprudently, aid and abet that authoritarian intolerance he seeks to oppose. If his moral imperative requires that he have a voice in the community, his attempt to obey the

26. Michnik, "After the Revolution," *op. cit.*, p. 64.

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dictates of that imperative may render him irrelevant in the community's life. This is the intellectual's predicament: convinced that his role entails great responsibilities yet uncertain whether they can be fulfilled, committed to democratic principles yet aware that democracy offers no grounds for conviction, needing to help formulate the "authentic civic and intellectual life" upon which — according to the intellectual — the community depends, yet unsure what the nature of the community is.[27]

Until recently, the old regime's modernist lip service to vanguard values offered intellectuals a residual illusion of power.[28] In this situation, the government's inability to deliver on its promises created discontent that intellectuals, because of the place the system still assigned to them and their ideals, were in a position to help focus. Under the new regime the dissatisfactions the market is breeding seem less easy to organize and the place of intellectuals more difficult to ascertain. The ideology of the new order might best be captured by the privatization slogan that has recently appeared on Warsaw's television, radio and buses: "Learn the Power of Your Money." When money speaks loudest, intellectuals who

27. As Bauman has argued, today's societies may be able to function best in the absence of what intellectuals have traditionally recognized as values. He writes, "[N]one of the patterns so far produced, or likely to be produced as things go at the moment, promise to render the social world hospitable to intellectuals in their traditional role. . . . The choice is, indeed, between the 'dictatorship over needs' in the Soviet-type system, and the consumer society of the West — one that has taken all the lids off human desires, and has left no space for the limiting role of values, breeding instead an incessantly growing volume of dissatisfaction parallel to the unstoppably swelling volume of commodities. In the system of the first type, the intellectuals have been, so to speak, liquidated as a class, that is, they have been collectively expropriated of their shared function of generating and promoting the values the state and its subjects are expected to implement and observe. Values are now articulated by the state itself, but above all they are (in practice, if not in theory) by-passed as the means of societal reproduction and all but replaced by techniques of coercion, manipulation, and panoptic control. In a system of the second type, the practical effect on the position of the intellectuals is virtually the same, once all the obvious differences between the two systems are granted: values have been turned into attributes of commodities, and otherwise rendered irrelevant. It is therefore the mechanism of the market which takes upon itself the role of the judge, the opinion-maker, the verifier of values. Intellectuals have been expropriated again." Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-24.

28. Whatever the situation, the Party still assigned to ideologists of various sorts key roles in its hierarchy. The *nomenklatura* included not only the staff of key educational institutions like the National Academy of Social Sciences, but whole categories for the heads of social organizations and "mass media, publishing houses and scientific institutions." A side effect of this large representation of intellectuals in the *nomenklatura* projected members of the opposition such as Michnik and Kuron a place and an importance that Western democracies do not afford their ideologists. As Ost points out, until the late 1960s the relation between dissidents and the Party was frequently fraternal. See Ost, *Solidarity*, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-53.

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wants to address other values have trouble being heard.

If intellectuals have trouble being heard, however, it may be because they have trouble listening. After all, the monetary and moral realms of value are not easily disentangled, nor is it clear which is more important. Large numbers of Poles are currently learning the power of the government's economic reform to dispossess them of their livelihoods and their traditional way of life. Other Poles are learning that the Church's moral reform threatens their control over their bodies, their educational system and their place in society. Intellectuals supply some mobilizing vision, not only of understanding but also of judgment, in a situation in which the relation between individual justice and communal demands is still an issue. Because they are specific, local, confused and ambiguous, and because no one is in a position to legislate answers to them, such issues do not lend themselves to grand gestures or heroic poses. Like their counterparts in the West, Polish intellectuals must learn to listen to those with whom they wish to speak. They must seek what Michnik himself calls "dialogue." If dialogue does not mean preaching, it also does not mean simple acquiescence. The grounds of dialogue in a society under stress are frequently battlefields. But for the battle to be truly joined, each side must engage the other. It cannot be a dialogue of the deaf. One of the intellectuals' tasks is to define the common ground on which battle can be joined.

The heroic gesture embodying moral values can be powerful when challenging the worn out language of a corrupt party-state. It becomes problematic in a democracy. Yet the intellectuals' role as spokesmen for morality and justice is, if anything, more important now than it was for the Leninist vanguard party. Ironically, it may be more dangerous to antagonize the democratic "community" than to antagonize the authorities. No one is about to throw Michnik in jail, but he runs the same danger as an intellectual in the free market. He may no longer be able to attract an audience.

Michnik confronts a perennial problem: for whom does one write, and in whose name does one speak? How can one assume power and what do criticism and theory mean in today's world? If anything, his problems in the East offer intellectuals in the West an occasion to reconsider their situation and their relation to the community at large. His example provides no consolation. But considering Michnik and Poland at this point clarifies the possibilities, limitations and paradoxes of intellectual action.

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Notes:

Switzerland, for Example: 700 Years Old and Still Going Strong . . .

Willi Goetschel

When Einstein was asked what he would do if the world were to come to an end, he replied he would catch the next plane to Switzerland where everything happens fifty years later. But now Switzerland is catching up. As elsewhere, crime rates are rising and brutality is increasing.[1] Thus, on the occasion of Switzerland's 700th anniversary, most Swiss think there is nothing to celebrate. Fed up with the prospect of patriotic activities, a newly formed committee has even issued a manifesto titled: "700 Hundred Years are Enough!"[2] The mood is so dominant that even positive aspects of Swiss life have become obscured.[3]

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1. It begins in the schoolyards, where the latest game is the Americans against Saddam Hussein — a good pretext for beating up one's enemies, as the kids were quick to realize. Extortion also has been reported among school children, and crime in general is receiving much more coverage. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* has published a series of articles dealing with personal safety problems in Zurich. The first article, "Schleichende Verunsicherung und Angst" (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung* [July 27-28, 1991]) deals with the growing aggression and brutality throughout the city, panhandlers' increasingly intimidating tactics, and the upsurge of drug-related crimes. Zurich's "needle park" and highest rate of AIDS in Europe have become well-known. Arson is reported in buildings housing African, Sri Lankan and other immigrants. And, while the necessity of restructuring immigration policies is generally acknowledged, Kurds and other refugees seeking shelter in Switzerland are routinely denied asylum or deported. More and more cab drivers and bartenders are carrying guns. As Swiss cities develop inner city problems of American proportions, baseball, which has never been popular in Zurich, is finally being appreciated: some bartenders now keep baseball bats behind their counters. Cf. also Alan Riding, "700th Anniversary as a Nation, Switzerland Does some Soul-Searching," *The New York Times* (August 11, 1991), p. 3.

2. *Die WochenZeitung* (November 2, 1990).

3. If, owing to its history, size and exemplary stability, Switzerland has long been seen as a kind of world laboratory, its neighbors down the Rhine have of late become somewhat apprehensive given the latest environmental disaster caused by the Basel pharmaceutical industry feeding its byproducts into the river. The Rhine will remain toxic for the next decade, but only downstream of Basel — the Swiss are extremely conscientious about themselves and, indeed, the lab is still functioning.

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The idea of a 700-year-old Switzerland is all-pervasive. As usual, Swiss seriousness hypostatizes the celebration so much that, instead of being enjoyed, it ends up crushing the collective super-ego. Whether the whole affair is celebrated, as the establishment wishes, or denied, ridiculed or ignored by its detractors, the complicity of either side betrays a predetermined distribution of roles which leaves no room for surprises. Criticism itself has become part of the scheduled events: even the most violent attack is turned into yet another acknowledgment of Switzerland's 700-year history.

One of the reasons for widespread disenchantment with the celebration is the recent scandal about the extensive dossiers the government has kept about its citizens. This has generated such an outrage that most intellectuals have called for a *Kulturboykott*,"[4] i.e., a refusal to participate in the festivities of what is now considered a corrupt state. It was decided that, unless all dossiers were released by the end of 1990, the state should be regarded as untrustworthy and, therefore, any further collaboration with it would be impossible. Such long overdue criticism, combined with intense and occasionally righteous soul-searching, has produced a situation in which everyone feels compelled to settle one's personal score with the state. What had always been regarded as a benevolent welfare state now appears as the cause of everyone's discontent.

The dossiers have become a symbol of the state's evil character. Their real and imagined extensiveness has cast doubt even on the intelligence of the intelligence service.[5] Now everyone jokes about one's own dossier. A restaurant in Basel has gone so far as to offer special discounts to customers who bring their dossiers. Not to have one can be devastating, as it immediately betrays one's social irrelevance. But the father state (*Papi-Staat*, as it is called) has graciously obliged, leaving hardly anyone out, no matter how dull the entry.[6] So far no one is selling fake dossiers for those somehow omitted. But that may only be a matter of time. Some maintain that in the end the government will profit from this whole affair. Not only has the state budget been increased to clean up the mess, but requests for dossiers might encourage the government to open new ones for those heretofore left out.

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4. Documents regarding the *Kulturboykott* have been edited by two editors of *Die WochenZeitung*, Fredi Lerch and Andreas Simmen. See their *Der leergeglaubte Staat. Dokumentation einer Debatte* (Zürich, 1991).

5. In an open letter to Marco Solari, the delegate to the Federal Councillor in charge of the 700-year celebration, Max Frisch spoke of the the dossiers as "documents of ignorance, pedantry, and parochialism" and of "the betrayal of the constitution in the everyday life of this confederation (*Verfassungsverrat als eigenössischen Alltag*)." This correspondence was published shortly before Max Frisch's death in *Die WochenZeitung* (March 15, 1991).

6. Cf. *Schnüffelstaat Schweiz. Hundert Jahre sind genug*, ed. by the "Kommitee vom Schluss mit dem Schnüffelstaat" (Zürich, 1990). This work explains how to decipher one's own dossier, whom to contact to obtain it, etc. For a history of the first century of the Swiss political police, see Urs Paul Engeler, *Grosser Bruder Schweiz* (Zürich, 1990). Thomas Hürlimann's and Urs Widmer's plays dealing with the dossiers scandal have already been performed in Zürich.

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The Celebration Circuit

If history is seen as a mirror, it can be a useful means for determining identity. But, as Lichtenberg succinctly put it, if a monkey looks into a mirror, what does he see? A playful attitude towards history seems to call for experiments. This is one of the ideas behind the organization of the 700th anniversary celebration. Thus, it turns out to be less a large-scale government-sponsored extravaganza, than a commercial affair clearly modelled after the French (1989) and US bicentennials (1976).[7]

Originally, the Swiss government proposed a single grand exposition: "CH-91" (*Confoederatio Helvetica*-91). But the proposal met with such opposition that it was readily dropped in favor of a decentralized trilogy of festivals in different parts of Switzerland: the "Festival of Confederation," in the German-speaking parts, the "Festival of Four Cultures" in the French parts, and the "Festival of Solidarity" in the Italian and Rhaeto-Romanic parts. This anniversary system becomes more complicated as each festival consists of a subset of celebrations scheduled all over Switzerland. The official themes are "encounter, tradition, solidarity and utopia" (official press release).[8] To follow this schedule would keep one busy from January 1st (the meeting of chimney-sweepers in Solothurn) to December 20th (the concluding concert in Bern).

The official opening of the celebrations took place January 10th in Bellinzona. The well-crafted address by the President of the Confederation, Flavio Cotti, defined polyglossia as the very core of Swiss identity and rejected the standard account of Switzerland as a *Sonderfall* (special case). More revealing, however, were the placards displayed in the demonstration which took place before the intonation of Rossini's overture to "Wilhelm Tell," which marked the official opening. They read "*700 anni di utopie schedate*" (700 years of well-filed utopias), "*Schluss mit dem Schnüffelstaat*!" (Enough of the snooping state!), and a sarcastic comment usually shouted at strikers: "*Andate a lavorare!*" (Go to work!).[9] Even more telling was the remark by a local spectator: "That is how it must have been three hundred years ago: up there the lords, down here the people."[10]

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7. Besides the customary T-shirts, stickers, etc., there are, of course, a 700 year wine vintage, a tie designed by commercial artist Jean Tinguely, and a chair designed by Mario Botta, the architect of the large tent where the inauguration of the official celebration took place. The "La Suisse n'existe pas" T-shirt is also selling well. See Linus Reichlin, "Jenseits der 700-Jahr-Smoking-Fliege," in *Die WochenZeitung* (July 12, 1991).

8. The office of the delegate of the Federal Councillor (in charge of coordinating the celebrations) has printed a complete schedule for the press — a pocket calendar listing all the planned activities. It is titled "What is actually being played up in Switzerland in 1991?" (*Was wird eigentlich 1991 in der Schweiz gespielt?*). The official English version is a little less playful: "What on earth is happening in Switzerland in 1991?" The version for the public has a less provocative title: it is simply called a schedule of celebrations.

9. *Tessiner Zeitung* (January 12, 1991).

10. *Berner Zeitung* (January 11, 1991). The same day, *Le Jura Libre* carried a "Message for the Ticinese" encouraging them to "say no to humiliation," i.e., to serve as the location for the beginning of the celebrations. The call to remember the once suppressed people of Vaud, Argovia, Rhaeto-Romania, and Jura, however, went unheard.

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The next big spectacle was the May 2nd "Jubilee Session of Parliament." A play had been commissioned from Hansjörg Schneider to be performed in the Plenary Assembly Hall of the National Council. Schneider made the mistake of writing a play critical of the state. His piece was rejected by the director who managed, by some sleight of hand, to put on a production of Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *Hercules and the Aegian Stable* — even over the objections of Charlotte Kerr, Dürrenmatt's widow who insisted her husband would never have allowed such a thing.[11] At any rate, the Dürrenmatt play was performed as scheduled.

In its Jubilee Session, Parliament passed a 700 million franc appropriation, 400 million of which are to amortize Third World country debts, and 300 million to finance environmental protection programs in the Third World, such as conservation of rain forests and the ozone layer.[12] Furthermore, retired citizens on social security received an extra 700 franc bonus in September as a gesture of respect for the elderly (120 million).

The opening of the "Festival of the Four Cultures" on May 3rd began a series of events covering various cultural activities.[13] Most interesting of all are the "Bulles d'utopie" — a concept developed by Swiss filmmakers. It is a series of short commercial-type video bites carrying utopian messages. Filmmaker Fredi Murer calls it a "*Gesamtkunstwerk*" (total artwork) and sees it as a way to counter "Big Brother" with many little sisters and brothers.[14] Subversive messages lasting between 7 and 138 seconds are fed into the communication networks. What is hailed as an innovative avant-garde project, however, may as well be a clever expedient to stay within a tight budget. Their fragmentary character makes the "bulles d'utopie" flashy, quick and cute. But they do not and cannot deal with utopian or critical thinking. The audience is invited to watch, listen and wonder. But, as has been pointed out, thinking is not mentioned.[15]

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11. At a dinner with the President of the National Council the year before, Dürrenmatt was reportedly asked what could best be said on the occasion of the 700th anniversary of Switzerland. According to his widow, after a long silence he replied; "If I were you, I would abolish it in 1991 and found it anew in 1992." At any rate, the copyrights are owned by a publisher who had no qualms about it since, allegedly, his job is to see to it that his author's works are widely distributed. The widow has no property rights on the work. See Charlotte Kerr Dürrenmatt, "Herkules im Parlament — Dürrenmatt hätte sich gewehrt," *Basler Zeitung* (April 3, 1991); and the interview with Dürrenmatt's publisher in *Die Wochen-Zeitung* (April 12, 1991); Schneider's play "Tellensöhne" was read in the basement of the Schauspielhaus Zürich. As for the honorarium, the author is suing the flaky director.

12. As Leo Schelbert pointed out, however, "there is no innocent Switzerland." Support of Third World countries must not be viewed as purely a good will gesture, but as reparation. See *Tages Anzeiger* (July 29, 1991).

13. In Fribourg there was "Rock 700," a rock, pop and folk music festival; Geneva has featured more classical and avant-guarde music; Jura is staging literary events; Neuchâtel has exhibited contemporary Swiss architectural art and Zürich has held its prestigious "Heureka exhibition" presenting current Swiss scientific research.

14. Fredi Murer, "Gedankenblitze zur Schweiz," in *St. Galler Tagblatt* (June 17, 1991).

15. Peter Surber, "Subversives Geflimmer: die Aesthetik der 'Bulles'," in *St. Galler Tagblatt* (June 17, 1991). Yet, even these apparently smooth audiovisual bites have not

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The "*Mythenspiel*" ("Mythological Drama" inadequately translates the wordplay as the mountain *Mythen* provides the background for the open air stage) had its premiere July 28th.[16] Along with almost everything else having to do with the celebrations, it made its appearance in the press, long before.[17] Herbert Meier, the author of the play, had a clever plan. He did not want to have the Wilhelm Tell myth parade in front of the audience. It was not to be a mythological play, but a *Mythen* play: a play in front of the *Mythen* mountain — a play of people in the landscape. Thus, the play opens with his protagonist, who is appropriately named Teiler (one who shares or distributes) having an accident with his Mercedes (Germany as a Euro-threat or Switzerland as an accident?) sending him on an imaginary soul-searching trip where he encounters marginalized people from a distant past. Thus, he runs into the likes of Henri Dunant and Pestalozzi — people otherwise not very visible this year. One of them, Troxler, an original, but largely forgotten, early 19th-century philosopher, recites the "original law concerning freedom," which in turn is projected, by means of a laser beam, onto the *Mythen* mountain in the background. The play, however, runs out of gas when it loses sight of proportions and becomes incomprehensible. Apparently, in the age of mass communication it is becoming increasingly difficult to communicate with the masses. Clearly, a giant festival cannot articulate introspections and inner journeys. Its deployment of laser beams necessarily transforms the effort into mere kitsch. High-tech laser kitsch, after all, is nonetheless kitsch. As such, the director ends up degrading the play into a meaningless electronic arrangement.

Later in the year there was a military parade at Stans and Emmen to celebrate Europe; a "Festival of Youth" took place in the Engadin Valley culminating a week later in a "Day of Europe"; and a "Day of Prayer" — a Swiss version of Yom Kippur: an ecumenical affair with Muslims, Jews, Christians, etc. — was scheduled in Sarnen. The festivities peaked on August 1st, which

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escaped censorship. At the request of some officials, Federal Councillor Delamuraz has censored a controversial "bulle" about Red Brigade member Alvaro Baragiola-Loiacono presently imprisoned in the Lugano penitentiary. The copyrights of all "bulles" are held by the Confederation — at least until the end of the year. This particularly "offensive" *bulle* will probably not be shown before next year's annual Swiss movie festival in Solothurn when the copyright will have expired. See "Zensur?" in *Tages Anzeiger* (June 21, 1991).

16. As *Blick*, the largest circulation Swiss tabloid, succinctly put it in its headlines: "The most expensive riddle of Switzerland. It is our festival performance. It costs 10 million. And nobody understands it." See *Blick* (July 22, 1991).

17. Thus, it was reported that just the wood needed to build the huge open air stage and seatings cost 30,000 Swiss Francs. Along with the directing crew, this wood was delivered from Austria — the country against which Tell and his confederates supposedly rebelled in the event Switzerland is now celebrating. (Though new historical research shows that there never was any serious Austrian oppression). See the interview with Werner Meyer by Hans Hartmann and Karin Schafroth, "Irrtümer und ideologische Platitüden," in *Die WochenZeitung* (August 2, 1991)

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was designated as Switzerland's official birthday and national holiday. Not surprisingly for Switzerland, even this state act has met with resistance in some cantons, which have refused to institutionalize it. As a result, while workers in some cantons got the day off, their compatriots in other cantons had to work.

Speaking in the historic Rütli Meadow where, as the saga goes, Wilhelm Tell, Fürst and Stauffacher first swore allegiance to the Confederacy, the President of the National Congress focused on the main issue of all these events, the future of Switzerland within Europe, by projecting the image of Switzerland on its way to joining a Europe encompassing both the West and the emerging East. This theme was perhaps best expressed in the front-page editorial of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* by its editor-in-chief. Seeking to compensate, in fact overcompensate, for the capitalist project to turn Europe into a fully rationalized large-scale factory, Hugo Bütler stressed political freedom. In almost every sentence, as in almost all public discussions in Switzerland, there is tension between multinational corporations and what Bütler characterized as the venerable "Swiss ideal of political freedom without masters and servants, as Tell symbolizes it."[18]

While official statements dealt with a future Europe, however, the Jura separatists expressed their dissension on the ground. They sprayed the Rütli Meadow with herbicides so that, shortly before August 1st, the inscription "*Jura libre*" appeared written in the grass. To meet this last minute challenge, the army covered the damaged areas with green nets. If Switzerland is not as multicultural as it would like to be, its roots in the diversity of a federal self-consciousness is displayed in the multitude of its flags. If every other country displays at its state celebrations exclusively the colors of its flag, in Switzerland the presence of the many flags of the various communities and cantons remind the spectator that the Swiss Cross is but a symbol of confederation firmly checkmated by the cantons' diverse identities. The true spirit of this mega-celebration, however, is best captured by two key symbols created especially for the occasion: the "Tent" and the "Path."

The Tent and the Path

The opening celebration in Bellinzona as well as a select few crucial events take place in a tent — or so the mobile 120-ton metal and 3.3-ton Polyester PVC construction is called. Designed by the Ticinese architect Mario Botta, the tent is also a symbol. Originally planned to house nationwide functions, its platform became the linkage uniting the various celebrations taking place within it. Thus, the platform became its own message. Its "mobile dome," as Botta calls it, is a playful dialogue with the history of self-representation of power centers. Borrowing from a variety of illustrious precedents, it ends up as a light construction made out of the key constituents of modernity: steel and plastic.[19]

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18. Hugo Bütler, "Zum 1. August," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (July 31, 1991), p. 1.

19. Among others, the tent borrows from the Pantheon, Brunelleschi's Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, the projects of French architects Etienne Louis Boullée's Cénotaphe

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The structure has 13 steel pillars: each supporting two flagholders representing the 26 cantons. Marking the top of the tent, the 26 flags come to a circle as in an assembly of banners. In their center waves the Swiss flag. In its sheer complexity, the construction pretends a fascinating simplicity. That was exactly Botta's in-tention. But if a symbol accumulates that much physical weight, things become complicated. Thus, the tent can be erected only with the help of Swiss troops and to transport it is a major logistic exercise.[20] If the tent serves as the focal point on which personal and national, individual and social hopes can be projected, it also captures all of them in a single symbol. Whereas "[t]he tent which, to be sure, is no tent," reminds one critic of jugglers, soldiers and/or camping tourists, another recalls the similarity to a Renaissance war machine or an ancient catapult (Carloni).[21]

The "Path of Switzerland" is another key symbol of the 700-year celebration. It is a hiking trail stretching over 21 miles from the Rütli Meadow to the Lake of Uri and Lucerne. Hiking is not just a national pastime; it has quasi-sacred connotations. It must be done with devotion. You are what you walk. Novalis' famous line is: "Where are you going?" Answer: "Always home." Because of its size, in Switzerland wherever one walks, one is always on the way home. As a

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for Newton (1784), Claude Nicolas Ledoux' cemetery for the city of Chaux (1784), the 1927 project of the Lenin Institute in Moscow by Ivan Ilych Léonidov, and Buckminster Fuller. Cf. Tita Carloni's contribution to Mario Botta, *La Tenda-La tente-Das Zelt*, (Zürich: Artemis, 1991). Besides interesting pictures of many aspects of the construction of the tent, which in some way make a quite Freudian statement, this volume also contains essays by Jacques Pilet, Harold Szeemann, and a postface by Mario Botta.

20. Jacques Pilet, "Le piège de Botta," in Botta, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

21. To see this construction as a "surrogate mother's breast" may be pushing it, if one considers all the pointed standards sticking in the air. Rather, it seems to refer to Otto Wagner's turn of the century Viennese architecture. Wagner loved to top his constructions with iron wreaths and coronas just as Botta's dome carries them: exact replicas of the Royal-Imperial power structure of the Hapsburg empire. Cf. Konrad Rudolf Lienert, "Wie kam die Krone auf das Zelt?" in *Tages Anzeiger* (July 12, 1991). The tent also raises other questions. Its design can only suggest highflying ideals achieved by means of rather heavyweight technology — a reliance on force and strength instead of lightness and economy. Such a technology of abundance appears capable of carrying out difficult solutions only through force and technology, rather than through persuasion and reflection. (Carloni, *op. cit.*, p. 21 and 23.) But then the marriage of poetry and politics has never been unproblematic. When Pilet remarked, "[l]et's face it: the crazy idea [to build that tent] surely is less demented than the one of constructing anti-nuclear bunkers or luxurious speculation houses with eternally closed blinds" (Pilet, *op. cit.*, p. 46), he betrayed an ironic Freudian slip in as far as he wants to exclude the two most obviously Swiss architectural models of the tent: the anti-nuclear bunker and the locked luxury house. Such involuntarily-provoked images cannot be obliterated by supplementing in an arbitrary fashion all kinds of fancy models. Planned also to be erected on the picturesque plain of the Engadin valley next to Nietzsche's favorite spot and the birthplace of his Zarathustra, the tent was relegated by the village of Sils Maria to another less prominent and "disturbing" site. The plain is protected by law against any kind of structures, and the tent, it was argued, falls under that category.

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sport, hiking is at the same time a ritual. In a landscape traditionally difficult to travel, horses and donkeys have been reserved for the wealthy and the infirm. Warriors, hunters, and other travelers have had to rely on their own feet. Thus, historically, hiking has been the democratic way to travel. In the age of mechanized technology, however, hiking has acquired leisure-class qualities. This explains why it has become an activity with archetypical meaning. The perfect Swiss is one who hikes. The perfect Swiss family is the one hiking in troop-formation. As a didactic concept, the trail is geared towards families, school classes and scouts. As a symbol of the cooperative nature of the Confederation, the "Path of Switzerland" is built in such a way that each canton is assigned responsibility for a piece of the path. Ordered chronologically according to the year each particular canton joined the Confederation, the length of the stretch is proportional to the size of the canton's population.[22]

Go Tell it on the Mountain

In Greek mythology Zeus, disguised as a bull, seduced Europa and carried her away on his back. Today the seduction of Europe threatens to carry Switzerland away in a Eurorgy. The debate about Switzerland's origins reflects more than mere historical curiosity; it has to do with Swiss identity. If Switzerland did not have enough problems of its own, European unity now looms behind every discussion. Pressure from the European Community grows daily.[23] The Swiss response has been typical. On the one hand, Switzerland says it is not going to join the European Community; on the other, the country has been tacitly adjusting to greater European standards in education, industry and business. What ultimately seems to matter, however, is the bottom line: whether or not there are economic benefits.[24]

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22. The path comes with a "hiking phone" which updates particularly interesting sections of the path, wheel-chair accessibility, planned events, local weather forecasts and warnings about possible traffic jams. There is also an official 200-page hiking guide. Three days after the Path's official opening on May 4th, vandalism was reported on the segment representing the half-canton Basel-country by "Anti Basel-country vandals." See *Basler Zeitung* (May 7, 1991).

23. For example, diplomatic and political pressure is being exerted on the Swiss government to lift the 28-ton weight limit on trucks traveling Swiss highways. The EC wants a 40-ton limit. Apparently not much has changed in 700 years. The crucial bridge over the Schöllenen Canyon in the Gottard Pass was built in the middle of the 13th century, probably as early as 1236, and it immediately became the decisive North-South link. (The first crossing of the bridge dates back to that year. Cf. Jean-François Bergier, *Wilhelm Tell. Realität und Mythos* [München, 1990]), originally published in Paris in 1988). Traffic could now greatly increase and turn the Gottard passage into the major commercial route connecting Italy with Northern Europe. The geopolitical situation has not changed, although its importance has increased.

24. Thus, the *Tages Anzeiger* reports, "[t]he federal political parties and the trade-unions acknowledge that, in order to adjust Swiss laws to conform to the standards of the European Economic Zone (*Europäischer Wirtschaftsraum*) the facultative referendum [the long-standing practice of being able to call for a referendum concerning any particular

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Indicative of this dilemma is a streetcar in Zurich which, since July, has been stylishly decorated with a display of "Tell's leap" — Wilhelm Tell's leap to freedom from the governor's ship that was taking him to prison — carrying the caption: "Free the original Switzerland (*Urschweiz*) from Europe's mobile madness!" But what is the original Switzerland? The founding three cantons? Freedom from what? Obviously, *Urschweiz* does not mean *Innerschweiz* (Switzerland's geographic core). This unintended indeterminacy is a phantom running through the streets of Zurich — a symptom of a pervasive identity crisis.

Wilhelm Tell is a figment of the Swiss historical imagination. Every Swiss child knows the saga of his brave delivery of Switzerland from the dreaded tyranny of the Hapsburg family, which Dürrenmatt jokingly referred to as the most successful Swiss family living abroad. As one commentator has observed: "Never have the boycotters hoped to remove Tell from his pedestal, although it would have been nice."[25] While the debate about the existence of a historical Tell seems to be as old as the myth, every *bona fide* Swiss is firmly convinced of the truth of the saga. It is the keystone of national mythology. Although the myth began more than 500 years ago, it became institutionalized only in the 18th century.[26] The original 1291 letter of the Confederation was published for the first time only in 1760, when it was discovered in an archive. Rather than Switzerland's birth certificate, this letter is merely the first known document to speak of an agreement of mutual help in legal and political matters and of ways to resolve internal disputes.

As Denis de Rougemont put it, if Wilhelm Tell did not create the Swiss people, the myth is crucial to understanding them because they created it.[27] The Swiss, as a nation, cannot be understood without their national arche(r)type. In fact, the legend of Wilhelm Tell may be Switzerland's most popular export item, surpassing chocolate, cheese, secret bank accounts, watches and army knives. It has been turned into books, plays, opera and movies, having received the full treatment of the culture industry. Tell's crossbow stands for the quality and precision of Swiss-made products.[28] While the products are expensive, the myth itself is free.

Precisely because he is a figment of the Swiss imagination, Tell is still one of the most important symbols of freedom. As the author of the standard work on Tell, Jean-François Bergier, put it: "Who knows, maybe some day we will need

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laws] will have to be abrogated. According to an inquiry by the Swiss News Agency, they are prepared to make this concession if membership to the European Economic Zone entails clear economic and political advantages." Cf. *Tages Anzeiger* (July 22, 1991).

25. Linus Reichlin, "Jenseits der 700-Jahr-Smoking-Fliege," *op. cit.*

26. Tschudi's *Helvetian Chronicle* of 1570 was originally published in 1734-36. *Wilhelm Tell, A Danish Tale*, by the Reverend Uriel Freudenberger and Gottlieb Emmanuel von Haller, appeared anonymously in 1760 and already questioned the Tell myth.

27. Denis de Rougemont, *Die Schweiz. Modell Europas* (Vienna, 1965), p. 266; original edition: *La Suisse ou l'histoire d'un peuple heureux* (Paris: Hachette, 1965).

28. This year a credit card has been added to the Tell iconography. According to the catchy caption on the application form: "It is not just for heroes." The card depicts a replica of Ferdinand Hodler's Tell with his crossbow.

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this symbol once again, maybe even in Switzerland. It will certainly be needed somewhere in the world."[29] As has been suggested, if Tell did not lead a rebellion against an alleged foreign government — something which probably never happened — he might very well be taken as a symbol for what can be actually documented: resistance at that time against the local government in power.[30] If such a subversive Tell still awaits discovery, at least by the Swiss themselves, this is due to the Left intelligentsia's confusion. The degree to which Tell is taboo is an indication of the depth of the Oedipal complex against the state. And the resistance to a psychoanalytic interpretation of the Tell myth sheds light on the politics of the 700th anniversary celebration.[31]

The Small State Paradox

"The Swiss were free? Free? These wealthy citizens locked up in cities? Free? These poor devils hanging on their cliffs and rocks? How can people be deceived? Only if you bottle such an old tale in alcohol. Once, they got rid of a tyrant and were able to believe themselves free for an instant. Now, their sons have created a swarm of little tyrants out of the corpse of the oppressor by way of a strange rebirth. Now, they keep retelling the old tale concerning how they once freed themselves and how they are still free. They sit behind their walls, caught in their habits and laws, their narrow-mindedness and pedantry . . ." This is how Goethe has poor Werther open his *Letters from Switzerland*.[32] Goethe's Werther could entertain such elitist notions of freedom: as a State minister, Goethe did not have to get his hands dirty. Yet, Werther's tone brings an important point home. Intellectual life in Switzerland has not exactly spoiled the Swiss with an abundance of high spirits, humor and nonchalance. Those have remained the prerogatives of great metropolitan cultures: Paris, London and Berlin.

Even if during this year's 700th anniversary celebrations there has been much talk about "multicultural" Switzerland, Gottfried Keller's complaint remains as valid as ever: as far as culture is concerned Switzerland is a "wooden floor." Low spirits, depression and parochialism often afflict even its most radical critics.[33] Introspection in Switzerland is even more radical than in Germany, the paragon of introspection. According to Helmuth Plessner there are two ways to react in extreme situations: by crying or by laughing. As Swiss culture is always caught in extremes, most cry and a few laugh. Leading intellectuals such as Frisch and Dürrenmatt best exemplify this predicament in their paradoxical roles as social critics by default. Frisch's uncompromising moral stand has become Switzerland's

29. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (April 27, 1991).

30. Interview with Werner Meyer, *op. cit.*

31. The symbolical overdetermination of apple, son, crossbow, governor's hat, and the shooting with all the paraphernalia seems to call for a psychoanalytic reading.

32. Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (Zürich: Artemis, 1949), Vol. 9, p. 480f.

33. Nizon labeled this the "discourse of narrowness" (*Diskurs in der Enge*), and Spitteler called it "the hell of coziness" (*Hölle der Gemütlichkeit*). See Paul Nizon, *Diskurs in der Enge. Verweigerers Steckbrief. Schweizer Passagen* (Zürich 1990) (originally published in 1970); and Carl Spitteler, *Imago*, "Hölle der Gemütlichkeit," chapter 3.

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public conscience, while Dürrenmatt's demented, grotesque caricatures highlight the uncanny atmosphere of the machinations of state and commerce.

As entertaining as Dürrenmatt's Kafkaesque parable of Switzerland as a prison may be, it remains just that: very funny. For its shrewd insights are at the same time determined by the limits imposed on the grotesque by the very nature of the genre: it can only open the eyes by at the same time placing new blinders on them. To submit Dürrenmatt's work to logical scrutiny would be as pedantic as seeing his latest publication, *Kants Hoffnung*,[34] as his political testament. It is one thing to recognize the political messages inscribed in literature, and another to take literature for politics. To confuse the two is a "bourgeois" detour to celebrate in aesthetics what cannot be addressed in other, less beautiful but more discursive, settings. For poetry to take on the theme of liberation is a necessity in a repressed society because there is no other form of expression. In societies in which political repression has found more subtle ways to control public opinion, however, it becomes retrograde. The recognition of these writers as leading social critics sheds dubious light on the source of such praise.

Small does not necessarily have to mean beautiful: the ugly face of intimacy threatens to marr the picture. In a state the size of Switzerland, where everyone knows their fellow-citizen, spies on them, and monitors their opinions, the public takes on a familial character. The extreme closeness of the Swiss angle *vis-à-vis* its own problems has exposed it to this danger: it has tended to exclude broader perspectives. It is the small state paradox of the transparency of the inner mechanisms that knowledge of intimate details blurs rather than clarifies the picture.[35] Rigorous adherence to absolute standards and obsession with details generates its own little "dialectic of enlightenment." Transparency changes into an undifferentiated mish-mash (*Verblendungszusammenhang*).

Helvetian Epilogue

Despite the predominant view of Switzerland predicated on a narrow understanding of its mores and culture, or lack thereof — a view based on a statist paradigm which constructs the Swiss state as outrightly dumb, if not dismally bureaucratic, Switzerland has more to offer than a serene scene of a land rich in chocolate, cheese, watches and bank accounts. More seriously, the Swiss federal model is considerably more relevant than critics of Switzerland *qua* vacation paradise seem to think. Neither a 700-year celebration nor the failure to enforce its realization renders this model obsolete. Its democratic federalism remains groundbreaking and the model's rationale remains a normative ideal:

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34. Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *Kants Hoffnung* (Zürich: Diogenes, 1991) contains Dürrenmatt's talk at the presentation of the Gottlieb-Duttweiler-Prize to Vaclav Havel, the *laudatio* for Michail Gorbachev, two posthumously published poems, and an afterward by Walter Jens calling Dürrenmatt a sublime thinker.

35. As for the symptoms of the small state paradox, the inferiority complex caused by absolute standards, see Charles Ferdinand Ramuz, *Besoin de Grandeur* (Paris, 1937). German translation in *Menschenmass, Fragen, Bedürfnis nach Grösse* (Zürich: Limmat 1990).

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respect for communal autonomy and competence, suspicion of all institutions other than those directly connected with the communities themselves and a firm belief in the constitutive role of democratic decision-making for whatever affects the community. This is intimately tied to the mandate given every time the citizen goes to vote. Its continual betrayal only confirms its importance.

The extreme self-criticism generated by this year's celebrations exemplifies the spirit of the Confederation. As long as every effort of the Swiss government is checkmated by the resistance of large parts of the population, this model has a chance. No 700-year celebration can render obsolete the democratic experience of a Confederation whose members are so empowered in their shared sovereignty that what may appear as discontent or even hubris is but the exercise of concrete citizenship. This is the real secret of the confederation's vitality.

The Swiss model's potential contribution to a new Europe must be taken at full face value. Switzerland might well have something to learn from Europe, but if Europe will not accomodate the kind of direct democratic federalist impulses for which Switzerland so stubbornly stands, the result may be the construction of yet another of today's super-states, the viability of which is becoming increasingly questionable after the recent collapse of the largest one. The shadows of the small state paradox and inflated Euro-talk may continue to dominate current discussions. Once the dust settles and it becomes a matter of actual performance, however, the contradictory political constituencies shaping Europe will be able to live with each other only if they deploy the pragmatism of the Swiss federal model.[36]

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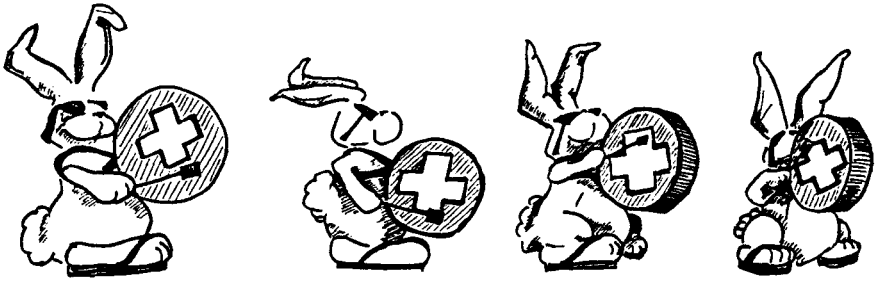
36. For a discussion of the Swiss model's relevance to the problems confronting European unification, see Paul Piccone and G. L. Ulmen, "Schmitt's 'Testament' and the Future of Europe," in *Telos* 83 (Spring 1990), pp. 3-34, and Wolf Heydebrand *et al*, "Schmitt's 'Testament' and the Future of Europe: Four Exchanges," in *Telos* 85 (Fall 1990), pp. 93-148.



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The Gulf War and Intellectuals, in Germany and the United States

Russell A. Berman

Within the American and the German public discussions concerning the Gulf war, the various cultural-theoretical claims and assumptions are of interest, particularly as they relate to their specific national contexts. There is, first of all, a historical context, as Dahrendorf pointed out, insofar as the American discussion of the Gulf took place in the shadow of Vietnam, while the German perception depended on the memory of WWII.[1] Indeed, the two discussions are replete with references to these pasts, with complex implications. "No more Vietnams" was inverted in a breath-taking ideological maneuver from an anti-war slogan into an argument for massive intervention rather than gradual escalation, while the anti-war movement was incapacitated by its initial inability to distinguish between the two situations: if Saddam was not Hitler, he certainly was not Ho Chi Minh. In Germany, the national past generated a prominence of concern with Israel as well as a reluctance with regard to military involvement, not only within the peace movement but far into the circles of conservative power; it was, after all, President Weizsäcker who asserted that "the world doesn't want to discover again what good soldiers Germans can be."[2] These are, of course, preliminary indications of how political actions — American intervention, German reticence — are not solely the consequence of objective interest but also the expression of subjective values and belief structures derived from collective experience. That is not an uncontroversial claim, implying that American policy may have been driven by the ghosts of Vietnam as much or even more than by oil interests and imperial geopolitics, or that Germany's foreign-policy caution was a cultural phenomenon rather than a calculated reliance on American soldiers as mercenary proxies protecting its own export oriented economy.

In addition to this diachronic component, the weight of the past, the discursive context also includes the perceived status of the discussants themselves within their synchronic terrains. Who are the presumed addressees of the statements on the politics of the war and its cultural standing? How do the authors imagine their own positions *vis-à-vis* their readers and the larger public? And

1. Ralf Dahrendorf, "Nachdenkliches zum Krieg am Golf," *Merkur* 45, No. 3 (March 1991), 234-35.

2. Cited in Jürgen Habermas, "Wider die Logik des Krieges: ein Plädoyer für Zurückhaltung, aber nicht gegenüber Israel," *Die Zeit* (February 22, 1991), p. 16.

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how are these two functions, authorized intellectuals and public recipients, configured *vis-à-vis* the political elite. This implied communicative structure is itself strong evidence of the character of the culture within which the discussion on the war transpires. In both settings, Germany and the US, the writers tend to claim for themselves a beleaguered status, defending their stance against a presumably widespread alternative position. This is no surprise but rather an example of the standard adversariality of intellectuals, whose metier conventionally includes opposition and criticism. This standpoint for argument is then variously modified to incorporate ambivalence, i.e., the concession that one's own stance is internally conflicted, or to insist on objective certainty, especially when addressing a minority audience presumed to share one's interpretation. An example of the former type is Habermas, the latter, Chomsky, and each implies alternative assumptions regarding the operation of culture in relation both to the mass public and the political leadership.

If these formalist speculations hold both in Germany and the US, the situations differ when one begins to examine the content of the material. In Germany, the texts indicate the assumption of either a widespread opposition to the war or, at least, inadequate support, and the key authors arguing for the war are compelled to suggest cultural explanations for this political misjudgment. In contrast, the American texts, by authors opposing the war, have to account for its unmistakable popularity, and they too reach for cultural rationalizations. In both cases then, and despite the alternative positions on the war, we are dealing with cultural intellectuals who, in the process of making political arguments, mobilize fragments of cultural theory in order to criticize the perceived false consciousness of the body politic. How do German intellectuals, variously defending the war, account for the anti-war sentiment of their compatriots? How do American opponents of the war account for its support? The substance of their arguments may tell us something about their respective cultures as well as about the character of the relation of intellectuals to the societies within which they operate.[3]

If one has to cite at least one metaphor as proof of the participation of cultural-rhetorical operations in the practice of war, it is the equation of Saddam and Hitler — this poetry did make something happen — and while it may have been authored by George Bush, it was above all in Germany, that the memory of the Nazi past played a role in structuring the discourse on the politics of the Gulf. The problem is that metaphors can be wild cards, so it is not immediately obvious who will be cast as the Nazis in the remake; for the peace movement, it was not the Iraqis but the Americans. Hence the comments of Walter Jens, author and literature professor, with regard to his impending prosecution for harboring two American soldiers, absent without leave, reportedly due to their

3. For a distinction between "populist culture" and current Left academic concepts of "popular culture" as the products of the culture industry, see Russell A. Berman, "Popular Culture and Populist Culture," in *Telos* 87 (Spring 1991), pp. 59-70. Here "popular" and "populist" are used indistinguishably.

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opposition to the war: "My wife and I lived through the National Socialist period. The risks taken by people who hid others then were thousands of times greater than ours. Naturally we are ready to accept responsibility for what we have done. One can't continually quote Carl von Ossietzky and not be willing to draw the consequences he did in 1933 — even if it means going to jail. I don't *think it will come to that, but one can expect at least a little consistency from* us."[4] Clearly the argument for civil disobedience is legitimated here through an imitative relation to historical anti-fascism. Yet it is also equally clear that the metaphor is strained, insofar as it is unlikely that Professor Jens will suffer the same fate in a concentration camp as did von Ossietzky, whom he claims to emulate. Nevertheless Jens' stance exemplifies what one might call the belated anti-fascism that can structure German political debate: because of the failure of the German Left to defeat Hitler in the 1940s, it opposes Hitler subsequently in the guise of the Americans: during the Vietnam era, in the context of the missiles discussion of the early 1980s, and again with regard to the Gulf.

The play of this metaphor is, however, more complex, since it was after all to a large extent American forces who defeated German fascism. On one level, one suspects a submerged jealousy on the part of anti-fascist Germans for the American success where they themselves failed. On a deeper level, the German anti-Americanism may still draw precisely on a resentment for the American defeat of Hitler, superficially hidden by a partially pretextuous anti-fascism. Hence an identification with the Iraqis who, like the Germans, are the victims of an American bombing campaign, perhaps even an identification because of Saddam's affinity with Hitler; in any case, the master metaphor of Saddam as Hitler was not, despite Bush's intention, always a univocal argument necessarily for military intervention. The matter is complicated further by the fact that it was, of course, not only Jens' Ossietzsky who was persecuted by the Nazis. Given the legacy of the Holocaust, the issue of Israeli security plays a significantly larger role in Germany than in the US (where it is, for reasons worth pursuing, rather suppressed).[5] Hence the disappointment of Israeli author Yoram Kaniuk with Grass' anti-war stance or, more vitriolically, Henryk Broder's accusations of *de facto* anti-Semitism within the German peace movement.[6]

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4. "Ich hoffe, daß unsere Politiker dem Druck von außen standhalten;" interview in *die tageszeitung* (February 11, 1991).

5. The special section of the *New York Times* of June 9, 1991, entitled "Operation Welcome Home," celebrating the victory parade on June 10, includes selected articles reporting the course of the war. None addresses the SCUD attacks on Israel; one treats a "retaliation plan that the Israelis abandoned" (p. 19). What for other states would be regarded as a matter of self-defense is, in the case of the Jewish state, imagined to be vengeful "retaliation."

6. Yoram Kaniuk, "Dreieinhalb Stunden und fünfzig Jahre seit Günter Grass in Berlin," *Die Zeit* (June 28, 1991), p. 17; Henryk M. Broder, "Unser Kampf," *Der Spiegel* (April 29, 1991), pp. 255-67; Alice Schwarzer, "Bornierte Freund-Feind Muster," *Der Spiegel* (May 20, 1991), pp. 248-51; Hans-Christian Ströbele, "Broders Spiegelfechtereien," *ibid.*, pp. 251-55; Brigitte Erler, "Ein Schreckgespenst," *ibid.*, p. 255.

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So in Germany, the equation Saddam=Hitler is translated into a recollection of WWII as a model for understanding the Gulf, and the results are, to say the least, complex. The subtitle of Habermas' essay in *Die Zeit* captures this tension — "a plea for reticence, but not with regard to Israel" — and his commentary explains the historical dimensions of the problem: "It is true that many citizens of the Federal Republic react ambivalently to the war in the Gulf. There are historical reasons for this. The two strongest sentiments that formed the political consciousness of, for example, my generation derive from the Nazi era and the war; and they are related to what we have retrospectively learned from them. The connection between dictatorship and the genocide on the Jews determine the loyalty with Israel; the connection between nationalism and the war of conquest determines a skepticism for any power politics, that endangers the civil coexistence of nations. The break with the fascist past is expressed nearly instinctively in two reflexes: no more anti-Semitism and retraction of equal civil rights; no more nationalism and war. The Gulf War leads to a conflict between these affects. Affects can pull us in different directions, but the internal connection of the groundings must not break."[7] Habermas transforms this ambivalence into what might be described as a moderate position: the recognition of Germany's "special duties" to Israel, hence support for the war, coupled with a cautionary note against the escalation of the "logic of war" into excessive violence or an improper annexationist politics. He can therefore treat the intervention as legitimate but keep the door open for a criticism of the precise character of the use of force or the nature of post-war power arrangements. Thus he rejects the anti-war movement while applauding its anti-militarist values, just as he underscores his opposition to German nationalist militarists, despite concurring in their support for the US.

The result is that for Habermas, characteristically, the central political categories are legality and proportionality. It cannot be a "just war," since, within the post-metaphysical context of modernity, an absolute or unquestionable good is not given. It is however a "justifiable war," insofar as there exist adequate grounds to assert international law with conventional military means. The rational limitation on the war involves both the scope of the means employed to reach the end and the legality of the end itself: revoking the annexation of Kuwait, perhaps the destruction of Iraq's non-conventional arms potential, but not an incursion into Iraq's sovereignty or its internal affairs, i.e., the removal of Saddam. For our purposes however it is important to recognize that Habermas' motivation is not (or not only) the real politics of the Gulf but rather the political culture of Germany. For the war does not take place solely in the shadow of 1945; it is also — here a further cultural element — post-1989 and implies a debate over the political culture of unified Germany. It is worth noting that commentators across the spectrum complained that the political elite — Kohl and Genscher — failed to articulate clear positions for Germany and a discussion of values consequently devolves onto cultural intellectuals. In the kindest version,

7. Habermas, "Wider die Logik des Krieges," *op. cit.*

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Dahrendorf suggests that the new Germany is simply too young to have developed a clear-cut political agenda. For Habermas, however, as well as for his longtime opponent, Bohrer, there is something bigger at stake that goes to the heart of German culture: What sort of nation is Germany? What traditions determine its political behavior? What does it mean to become a modern state?

Habermas' references to legality and rationality in foreign policy imply their centrality domestically as well: an effectively liberal position that draws its pathos from an always implied critique of German fascism and authoritarian traditions. Thus, despite his approbation of the war, by the end of the essay he defends the German reticence to provide unlimited support to the Americans and, therefore, the peace movement as well, as an indication of a cultural progress beyond the German militarist past. If the assertion of the rule of law means repelling Iraqi aggression, it also means, more importantly, an opposition to the revival of reactionary — for Habermas: antimodern — legacies of war and power politics: "This reluctance [regarding support for the US] is neither the result of old *incertitudes allemandes* nor the expression of a new German particularity but at best a reflected understanding of specific German experiences. It is also in the interest of our neighbors and Israel that I hope that the politics of reticence will not be crushed by that terrifying normalcy which would endow reunified Germany with its former aggressiveness and bless us with the long desired amnesia. That would not be pleasant, and not only for us. In terms of the civilized political culture that seemed to be developing in the old Federal Republic, the state unification has hardly meant a liberalization of the expanded Germany: in the East the return of old mentalities, here [in the West] the burgeoning of a chauvinism of wealth. If the idea of an international order, which the end of the Cold War appeared to promise, now gives way to an on-going state-of-nature between bellicose states, that would be just fine for the proponents of a fetishized normalcy. Now that they have won anything but laurels for their administratively forced unification politics, are they hoping to shift to a belligerent foreign policy?"

To rephrase that densely packed argument: Habermas opposed the relatively administrative rather than democratic process of unification, i.e., the annexation of the East German provinces rather than the national plebiscite (and debate) implied by the Constitution. He can allude to the post-unification political turbulence and economic hardships as evidence for the inadequacy of the process. He can critique the conservative constellation of "old mentalities," i.e., the irrationalism of a political romanticism, and "a chauvinism of wealth," i.e., the private virtues of accumulation rather than the public virtues of citizenship, to which he counterposes his program of rationality, the more desirable version of German cultural modernization. Germany can become more modern and more western not through an unquestioned acceptance of the political primacy of the modern West — the US — but through the development of a rational political culture, even when it leads to a "reticence" *vis-à-vis* the US.

Yet when one turns to Bohrer, presumably one of the "advocates of normalcy" intended by Habermas, the arguments in support of the war — or rather,

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against German opposition to the war — are driven by similar concerns: not rational legality, to be sure, which plays no role in Bohrer's post-modern conservatism, but the character of German culture and the overcoming of political romanticism. How can Germany become modern and western? By imitating the modern West. Earlier he had contrasted the opportunism of West German politics with what he perceived as the mythic heroism of the British during the Falklands War.[8] Now, in the context of the Gulf War, he views German reticence as a legacy of German "provincialism," an amalgamation of anti-western sentiment, misidentifications from WWII, and traditions of Central European cultural pessimism. If Habermas judged romanticism as the source of an irrational authoritarianism, Bohrer treats political romanticism, following Schmitt, as an inability to make decisions, leading to the same "apathy regarding practical-political morality," that impoverished Wilhelm II and that now generates the German discomfort with the war.[9] Indeed, Bohrer criticizes the irrationalism of the German peace movement less for its political tendency (with which he disagrees) than its inability to express even its own tendency in any politically significant manner: "Who were those teachers," he asks, regarding German anti-war protests "who led little children carrying candles into the street so they could express their 'Angst' and demonstrate for 'peace?' No sense of shame, let alone tact or style. No grasp of the ridiculousness of the ceremony. What was this strangely uncivilized, sentimental language, with undertones of blackmail? I suddenly understood that this was not a matter of different political opinions but different cultural mentalities: an eruption of feelings no longer restrained by a civilizational regulation and which, potentially, could go in a very different direction. At an English or American university there would certainly have been opponents to this language of sentiment, if only to uphold a principle of individualism. . . . As the protest wrapped in 'Angst' spreads through the universities, one sees that, due to the National Socialist catastrophe, unified Germany cannot, in a moment of crisis, be counted as a western power with corresponding political mentalities but as a Central European gray zone without the democratic traditions of a politically spontaneous public. American protests against the Gulf War had a concrete goal: their own war-waging government. German protests, by way of contrast, were rituals of sentiment without political argument."[10] The romanticism of German culture prevents the political elite — for whom Bohrer reserves his most bitter comments — from grasping the imperatives of geopolitics, and this same romanticism even prevents the peace movement from acting in a politically convincing manner. "This appears to be a German peculiarity, for even the mode of argument of the old 68er Noam Chomsky . . . is, despite his

8. Karl Heinz Bohrer, "Falkland und die Deutschen," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (May 15, 1982).

9. Karl Heinz Bohrer, "Provinzialismus (II): ein Psychogramm," *Merkur* 45, No. 3 (March 1991), p. 261.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 255-56.

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deceptively utopian categories, far from the appeal of German polit kitsch."[11]

Clearly Bohrer is less interested in a critique of Iraq (which Habermas provided in his treatment of the invasion as an infringement of international law) than in a dissection of German culture. Like Habermas, he suggests the need to overcome part of the cultural past. Like Habermas, the experience of National Socialism is of central diagnostic significance. Yet while Habermas presents it as the grounds for a learning process, enlightenment, leading to liberalization and modernity, Bohrer treats it as an amplification of a long-standing German deficiency in political behavior; instead of progress, only regression has ensued, and the only remaining possibility is an imitative admiration for the health of the West: "Only the Anglo-Saxons can operate normally with the horror scenario (which allowed them to eradicate Dresden in 1944 and later Hiroshima, with nearly no moral scruples). As lords of the history of the 20th-century, they have not developed a sense of pain and guilt, as little as someone who feels well subjectively goes to a psychiatrist. They are so self-assured because their morality is practical, a part of their praxis: their semantics is still covered by a holy cause. Some might be terrified by this, especially when they observe the metaphor of the American commander Schwarzkopf, who promises Hussein to 'kick his ass,' and apparently means the physical destruction of his army, while George Bush prays to God in pastoral concentration, like England's Henry V in the night of Azincourt. But to denounce this as 'false consciousness' entails a naive misunderstanding of an essential structure of the western hemisphere: it is not ruled by cultural critical nihilism but by the hope for meaning in difficult circumstances. One correctly resists the blackmail of the apocalyptic argument . . ."[12]

The prominence of the figures of nihilism and apocalypse within German culture can be confirmed by a brief look at Hans Magnus Enzensberger's essay on Saddam and Hitler.[13] For Habermas, political nihilism produced National Socialism and should be overcome by a program of rationality; for Bohrer, nihilism is a consequence of National Socialism that could only be cured by a great-power pragmatism; for Enzensberger it was the core of National Socialism but, furthermore, remains an effectively global potential. For Hitler, like Saddam, the goal was not the rational pursuit of power but total destruction, including his own. Therefore, any politics of appeasement or reconciliation are out of place. Secondly, the affinity between Hitler and Saddam implies that "the Germans were the Iraqis from 1938 to 1945," a claim with considerable consequences. It automatically subverts, at least in Germany, any racist interpretation of the war, and also accounts for the on-going anti-interventionist sympathies of the Germans: "German industry never had to regret the considerable services it

11. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 257-58.
13. "Hitlers Wiedergänger," *Der Spiegel* (February 4, 1991), pp. 26-28; trans. in *Telos* 86 (Winter 1991); cf. Günther Nenning, "Der Ajatollah des Westens: Hans Magnus Enzensbergers Wende zum Satanismus," *Die Zeit* (April 16, 1991).

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offered Adolf Hitler; that it aids his successor with the same zeal is only consistent. And if a considerable portion of German youth prefer to identify with Palestinians rather than Israelis, if it directs its protests against George Bush rather than Saddam Hussein, this cannot be explained away as innocence."[14]

Yet these aspects of Enzensberger's essay imply relatively limited political claims: that military force and not diplomacy for sanctions will be necessary to block Saddam's aspirations and that the German anti-war movement is marred by some problematic *völkisch* undercurrents. His central point however is considerably larger and gives a radically new inflection to the Saddam as Hitler metaphor. Habermas criticized Enzensberger's adoption of the metaphor because it undercuts the uniqueness of the Holocaust, relativizes the judgment on Hitler, and therefore tends to have an exculpatory impact on German history. Indeed in the recent *Historikerstreit*, Habermas had gone to the barricades against conservative historians who had pursued precisely that agenda. To direct the same criticism at Enzensberger is nevertheless unfair, since he anticipates it anyhow and presents a very different argument: not a reduction of the status of Hitler but an admonition regarding his potential return. The interesting question is however what it is exactly that Enzensberger imagines might be returning.

For Bush, Saddam is Hitler primarily as the aggressor, and the chain of associations leads through Munich, Chamberlain, appeasement and so forth; the lesson has to do with relationships among states and the respect for international borders. Enzensberger tells a different story. Hitler as well as Saddam is not a normal dictator like "Franco, Batista, Marcos, Pinochet" and others, oppressing their people and oriented toward their own self-preservation, but rather an enemy of the whole world, for whom rational calculation of interests is irrelevant, since "the death wish is his motive, and catastrophe is his mode of rule."[15] Furthermore, the national collective, far from being deceived by such leaders, participates eagerly in precisely this desire for suicidal destruction: "What enthused the Germans was not only the license to kill but much more the prospect of being killed themselves. Today, with similar zeal, millions of Arabs express the desire to die for Saddam."[16] Hence Enzensberger's move from the master metaphor to a claim regarding an anthropological potential for populations to pursue mass destruction, including their own. Such developments will tend to occur when local aspirations appear irrevocably blocked by international arrangements and world orders, leading to hate, resentment, and desperation in the community that perceives itself as disenfranchised.

Enzensberger's essay implies three conclusions. 1) The challenge of a nihilistic community can be met only by force and not by reason. 2) The perpetual disprivileging of population groups within international arrangements will tend to unleash these self-destructive impulses. 3) Saddam will not be the last repetition of

14. Enzensberger, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

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Hitler: "Eternal losers are everywhere. Their feeling of abuse and their proclivity to suicide increases every year. The nuclear arsenal for it is available on the Indian subcontinent and in the Soviet Union. Where Hitler and Saddam failed, in the final victory, that is, the final solution — their next follower may succeed."[17] In other words, a new world order designed solely to preserve an unequal organization of legitimate states and that can therefore be regarded as impervious to the appeals of particular communities will face constant threats of disruption.

What sort of general observations does the German material allow? The three authors — Habermas, Bohrer, and Enzensberger — support the war, albeit in different manners and with different arguments. Yet in all three cases, the discussion of the war is, to a greater or lesser extent, subverted by a deeper concern with Germany. There is a pervasive dissatisfaction with the political elite for its inability or unwillingness to clarify a consistent foreign policy. National identity is moreover refracted through at least three historical parameters: the developing character of political culture after the unification of 1989, the conflicted interpretations of the Nazi era, and the deeper legacy of romanticism and cultural pessimism. Furthermore, there is a distancing from the anti-war sentiment of the peace movement, although least emphatically by Habermas, and its deficiencies are accounted for in the terms of the analysis of national identity. The West, understood to be sure in various ways, appears as a desirable model, and the crucial question — the old question — is whether Germany will be able to overcome its past and emulate it.

In the US discussion, the situation is considerably different, although not necessarily different in the same way that Bohrer suggested. The image of Germany presented so far — and it is, of course, an over-generalization — entails pro-war intellectuals facing an anti-war public and a political elite that was, if not anti-war, then certainly extremely ambiguous with regard to the intervention. In the US, by way of contrast, it was a scenario of anti-war Left intellectuals facing a pro-war public and uniquely unable to account for this discrepancy. Indeed it is precisely with regard to that discrepancy that some apparently insufficient cultural theory is articulated. This is noteworthy insofar as the Left understands itself not only as oppositional *vis-à-vis* the elite but also democratic, i.e., allied with the popular will which, however, in this instance, it is evidently incapable of understanding.

If there is a similarity between Germany and the US, it has to do, strangely enough, with the political leadership. To be sure, Bush's advocacy of the war is a far cry from the ambiguities of Genscherism, but despite the substantive difference, a formal similarity is evident in his inability to provide a clear articulation of the war goals (which certainly contributed to his political difficulties before January 17th, and after, as well). If Saddam was Hitler, then why not complete the metaphor and remove him from power? If one calls on the Kurds to rebel, then why not support them? Was the point to end the occupation of Kuwait or destroy the Iraqi arsenal or induce a change in Baghdad? Whatever one's

17. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

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position on the war, it is likely that Bush said it at some point, since he effectively said every possible position.[18] One implication of this rhetorical confusion is that the motivation behind popular patriotism, the sea of yellow ribbons, was not at all necessarily identical to the motivation of the political elite, even if both supported the war, a point to which I will return in my conclusion.

Bohrer was prepared to extend his crucial distinction between an anti-political German romanticism and English-speaking pragmatism into the anti-war camps themselves: better a rational American anti-imperialist than an Angst-ridden German teacher. Yet if one can do without Bohrer's Anglophilia and look at the material on the war, the picture turns out to be somewhat different: German intellectuals, arguing against perceived public sentiment, operate with historical-hermeneutic means in order to characterize that sentiment, while American opponents of the war can explain the pro-war public only instrumentally by invoking charges of secret plans, manipulation and deception. Thus Michael Emery: "There is now a precedent for wide ranging censorship of U.S. correspondents and for increased use of CIA and psychological operations disinformation — in short, the propagandists won the war."[19] Similarly, Craig Hulet, "We've never had a more censored press in our history since WWII. . . . So every political objective George Bush has outlined is either false or an outright blatant lie. There can only be one conclusion: There's a political objective he hasn't told us."[20] Or David Bromwich: "A working political democracy does not work like this. But in the conduct of foreign policy, we have gone a long way now to a different system: a plebiscitary despotism, in which the executive is invested with extraordinary powers and contact with a docile public is mediated on television and in newspapers by reports of actions already taken."[21] Or finally, Bohrer's example of the pragmatic and, one supposes, Anglo-Saxon Chomsky: "You have to remember that this is the post-Orwellian world. When people say 'diplomacy,' what they mean is 'rejection of diplomacy.' . . . The reason for the U.S. rejection of diplomacy was also spelled out very clearly from the outset, right on the front page of the *New York Times*. You didn't have to work very hard to find it. There's a position at the *New York Times* called 'Chief Diplomatic Correspondent.' That's a euphemism meaning 'State Department spokesman'."[22]

One need not assume that the power elite is composed of paragons of honesty in order to regard the accounts just cited with some skepticism. For their implication is that real politics are always hidden, that the press serves primarily as

18. On Bush's uncontrolled rhetoric, see Bob Woodward, *Commanders* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), pp. 260f., 282, 302, 323.

19. Michael Emery, "How Mr. Bush Got His War: Deceptions, Double-Standards, Disinformation," *Open Magazine* (Westfield, NJ: 1991), p. 1.

20. Craig Hulet, "The Secret U.S. Agenda in the Gulf War," *Open Magazine* (Westfield, NJ: 1991), pp. 5, 7.

21. "The Gulf War — Taking Positions," *Dissent* (Spring 1991), p. 155.

22. Noam Chomsky, "The New World Order," *Open Magazine* (Westfield, NJ: 1991), pp. 9-10.

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a vehicle of deception, and that the public is extensively susceptible to the operations of manipulation. Thus public sentiment, popular support for the war, has absolutely no legitimacy of its own but is solely the intended result of disinformation from on high. It is however likely that the production of meaning is somewhat more complex. Indeed one could even concede the dubious claim that politicians are always only liars and still question the insinuation that the public is only duped, devoid of any intelligence, curiosity or disbelief, let alone an autonomous capacity for political or cultural will. For if we follow Chomsky et. al., then it is only they, the left intellectuals, who have access to the truth, while the cognitively impoverished masses make up an infinite field of couch potatoes, always available for harvesting by the mendacious mass media. If this is the only way the left can account for the discrepancy between its opposition to the war and popular support, then we can kiss good-by to the past decade of left-wing celebration of popular culture as somehow politically desirable.

Yet this is exactly where Chomsky leads us, back to a cultural theory of mass manipulation. "A properly functioning system of indoctrination has a variety of tasks, some rather delicate. One of its targets is the stupid and ignorant masses. They must be kept that way, diverted with emotionally potent oversimplifications, marginalized and isolated. Ideally, each person should be alone in front of the television screen watching sports, soap operas, or comedies, deprived of organizational structures that permit individuals lacking resources to discover what they think and believe in interaction with others, to formulate their own concerns and programs, and to act to realize them. They can then be permitted, even encouraged, to ratify the decisions of their betters in periodic elections. The rascal multitude are the proper targets of the mass media and a public education system geared to obedience and training in needed skills, including the skill of repeating patriotic slogans on timely occasions."[23] To be sure, Chomsky is critical of this system, and goes on to make his obligatory anarchist gesture by invoking Bakunin's prediction that in both state socialism and state capitalism, elites of bureaucratic intellectuals would retain power by manipulating degraded masses. The point however is that Chomsky himself buys into the paradigm as fully adequate: arcane conspiracies at the top, the deceived populace below. Especially if measured against the diagnoses of anti-war sentiment in Germany, Chomsky's is a sorely inadequate and instrumental description of the operation of culture in the US and one that, in the end, leads directly to the privileging of Chomsky himself as the sole vehicle of enlightenment.

The differences between Germany and the US with regard to this discussion are, obviously, immense. The Hitler metaphor has divergent implications, and the situation in post-1989 Germany, entailing a reorganization of the cultural political landscape, has little in common with contemporary America. There may have been a latent similarity with regard to popular support which, according to

23. Noam Chomsky, *Deterring Democracy* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), pp. 369-70.

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some accounts, may have been extensive in Germany outside of the peace movement, even if the political leadership failed to mobilize it. Yet here my data are too slim to permit any conclusions, and, in any case, the American material is in need of further conceptualization, precisely due to the collapse of any viable left cultural theory. The problem then is to do better than Chomsky and account for the discrepancy between a pro-war populace and anti-war intellectuals.

Two qualifications need to be made. First, it is of course obvious that not all intellectuals opposed the war, as a glance at *The New Republic*, *Commentary*, or even *Dissent* quickly shows. Many accept the neo-Wilsonian arguments for a new world order based on the formal principles of international law and unqualified respect for the sovereignty of states. Needless to say, however, this same statism operates on the left as the grounds for an anti-imperialist critique of American interventionism in the sovereign affairs of other nations, while, for Bush, it immediately led to a series of political fiascos: upholding the sovereignty of the Kuwaiti state withheld Bush from supporting the rebels against the Iraqi state, from supporting the Lithuanians against the Soviet state or the Slovenians and Croats against the Yugoslav state. Secondly, it is precisely this contradiction which separates the administration's interventionism from popular support for the war, in other words, the public approved of the war and soldiers could be mobilized to fight it not for the overt reasons of the administration — the public is not made up of passive consumers — but for reasons of their own.[24] At stake was less a Wilsonian new world order, a *pax americana* rationalized as international law, but a desire for community, which bears domestically the name of patriotism, and which, abroad, implies a fundamental sympathy and sense of obligation to other communities correctly or incorrectly perceived as being victimized by oppressive states. Support for the war dropped with the betrayal of the Kurds, for at that point the public, not at all as manipulated as the Left would have it, could perceive that the war had become one for state sovereignty and not communitarian autonomy, and precisely therefore with considerably less popular appeal.

This is a provocative analysis, which I still want to take one step further, but first let me retrace the key steps of the argument. The popularity of the war produces a crisis for the cultural left, which is forced to renounce much of its erstwhile popular culture agenda and retreat to a theory of state manipulation. But if the older arguments against manipulation are treated as valid, then the popularity of the war is, in effect, unexplained. The course of that popularity in the Winter and Spring proceeds from an initial congruence with aspects of administration policy to a definitive break over the Kurds and, hence, declining support. This observation allows for the articulation of the difference between a statist paradigm and a communitarian paradigm of political culture, amounting to a central contradiction in the US and, perhaps, in Germany (where however the configuration may be somewhat different). Neither

24. Constance Penley and Andrew Ross, "Couch Potatoes Aren't Dupes," *New York Times* (March 11, 1991); cf. Berman, *op. cit.*

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paradigm corresponds uniquely to pro-war or anti-war positions. Thus, both Bush, despite his principles, and Chomsky, despite his anarchism, place the state in the center of their analyses; neo-conservative support for the war was statist — defending sovereignty and law — popular support was communitarian, as was, by the way, paleo-conservative opposition. In fact, I would argue that for a while during the war, this tension found expression in a slightly skewed semiotic relationship between the two objects of display of pro-war sentiment: the yellow ribbon, indicating support for the troops, and the flag as the sign of allegiance to the state. The oxymoronic relationship between ribbon and flag collapsed at that point when administration policy finally showed its colors and its ultimate loyalty to the flag, the Iraqi flag that is, and the sovereignty of the state; for it was the sovereign, even if he is Saddam Hussein, to whom the new world order ascribes legitimacy, and not the popular insurrection.

It is precisely this contradiction between ribbons and the flags, the troops and the state, which are not the same thing (although the state certainly wishes they were) that leads to the conclusion of a deep-seated conflict between two competing ethics: on the one hand, an ethics of obligation, sacrifice and duty, lodged within a yearning for community that is, however, regularly disappointed; on the other hand, an ethics of rights, interest and law that appeals to the state — rather than to community — as the appropriate vehicle for the pursuit of a possessive individualism, necessarily antagonistic to sacrifice, including the sacrifice that military service might require. It is plausible to identify the former option with lower middle and working class strata, and the latter with the ascendant New Class, for which state and progress are nearly interchangeable. This could, in any case, shed light on the resistance to cultural inquiries into politics, a phenomenon which can be accounted for as a discursive consequence of the defense of the sovereignty of the state against any incursion of a communitarian dimension of values. Phrased more abrasively, the Left retreats to a cultural theory of manipulation not because of an inability to provide an alternative conceptualization but in order to avoid recognizing the potential for populist communitarianism that erupted during the war. For precisely this communitarianism challenges entrenched positions of the Left that has largely abandoned the participatory-democratic models of the 1960s and accepted the welfare statism of the bureaucracy.

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Knowledge and the 'Localities' Debate: Meditations on a Theme by Cox and Mair
Julie Graham and Kevin St Martin

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Reviews:

American Communitarianism Reconsidered

Casey Nelson Blake, *Beloved Community: The Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and Lewis Mumford.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 365 pp.

Along with many other critics in the 1940s, the Frankfurt School saw the dominant American school of philosophy, pragmatism, as the ideology of technocracy and efficiency, and thus anathema to any critical, social theory. This analysis, however, overlooked the by then mostly repressed democratic kernel of pragmatism's outlook, as can be found, e.g., in Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* (1927). There Dewey argued for a strong democracy based on a vibrant public life rooted in local communities — a social model best able to respond to Adorno's and Horkheimer's critique of the domination of the concept, identity logic, and most adequate to their call for "mimesis." Thus Dewey situated democracy in local traditions and communities instead of in the abstract communication theory of Habermas who, ironically enough, by the 1970s had managed to usurp and systematically subvert the emancipatory kernel of Critical Theory. In no way can Dewey's philosophy be sloughed as just so much grist for the technocratic treadmill or simplistic New Deal legitimation. The first generation of Critical Theorists probably mistook the ideology of some of the lesser-known pragmatist epigones embroiled in New Deal social engineering at the time of the Frankfurt School's American exile for pragmatism in general and for Dewey's philosophy in particular.

The Frankfurt School's misreading of pragmatism was not an isolated case, since in the 1940s and 1950s the technocratic view of pragmatism became dominant, thanks primarily to the conformist interpretations of the new generation of Cold War pragmatists. As such, a vindication of Dewey and pragmatism has been long overdue. This project of rescuing Dewey from his alleged followers and detractors has been recently undertaken by James Kloppenberg.[1] His book deals

1. James Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victories: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). See the review by Robert Antonio, "Quest for Uncertainty," in *Telos* 81 (Fall 1989), pp. 154-62. For a recent monograph on Dewey's life, which most forcefully vindicates his democratic and communitarian philosophy, see Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

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not only with Dewey but also with a plethora of thinkers, many of whom are little more than technocratic dreamers — most obviously Beatrice and Sidney Webb (the originators of the Fabian Society). Kloppenberg's attempt to save the original idea of the welfare state from what he considers to be later deformations of it often leads him to examine thinkers with questionable democratic credentials. To search for past American thinkers more thoroughly interested in communitarianism and participatory democracy, it is necessary to go beyond his book and look at the group of thinkers known as the "Young Americans": Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank and Lewis Mumford.

The Young Americans have been studied as the most important of America's cultural radicals.[2] They played a large role in Greenwich Village's "little renaissance" during the 1910s, known for such events as the Armory Show of 1913, which introduced Americans to the world of European modernist art, and the Paterson Pageant, which supported the strike in New Jersey at that time. The Young Americans hoped for an indigenous American culture that would throw off the ideas of stale, "highbrow" culture and European cultural superiority. This is most clearly seen in Brooks' *America's Coming of Age*, a book that is still of major importance in American literary criticism.[3] Brooks and Bourne were two of the most important writers for a journal they helped form called *The Seven Arts*. Here these cultural critics called for an American cultural renaissance, their past hero being Walt Whitman, and argued against America's entry into WWI. The journal's wealthy patron, Annette Rankine, was so upset with this anti-war sentiment that she cut her support, successfully destroying one of America's most interesting journals. Both Brooks' and Bourne's legacy lives on. During the 1960s, Bourne was revived as a hero for radical pacifists, and presently Mumford, a latecomer to the Young Americans' scene, has been upheld as an exemplary "public intellectual."[4] The question remains, though: do these social and cultural critics have anything to offer present day thinkers? Casey Nelson Blake has forcefully argued that they do.

One of the most important problems Blake faces in making his case for the Young Americans as serious social and cultural critics is Jackson Lears' groundbreaking work, *No Place of Grace*. Lears pushes the turn to a consumer culture back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Departing from the viewpoint of contemporary consumer culture, he often sees anti-modern thought having "unintended consequences" such as creating the conditions within which later cultural developments took place. Thus any critique of Victorian "character"

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2. For one of the most interesting treatments of Bourne as a cultural radical, see Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963* (New York: Norton, 1965), pp 69-103.

3. On this point, see Henry May, *The End of American Innocence: A Study of the First Years of Our Time* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1959), pp. 322-28.

4. For this argument, see Russell Jacoby, *The Last Intellectuals* (New York: Noonday Press, 1987). See also *Lewis Mumford: Public Intellectual*, ed. by Thomas P. Hughes and Agatha C. Hughes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

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building often became part of the larger shift towards a culture based on the management of "personality" via consumer goods. Much of Lears' book seeks to understand "why so much twentieth century American dissent has been so easily reassimilated to the mainstream."[5] Blake challenges Lears by showing that certain so-called "anti-modern" critics went far beyond fueling American consumer society and held the potential for a radical critique of American culture based not on shallow theories of Orientalism or vitalism (like the people Lears studied), but on what Blake calls "a communitarian vision of self-realization through participation in a democratic culture" (2).

Blake does a superb job at locating the thought of the "Young Americans" within the context of the Victorian culture in which they grew. According to Blake, their life within a domestic sphere sanctioned by Victorian norms was the source of many of the Young Americans' critical outlook (24). Unfortunately, this distinct vision of the world could lead thinkers such as Brooks and Frank towards an apolitical mysticism — the type Lears emphasized. Yet Brooks came to complement the mysticism and aestheticism of his youth by "identify[ing] his cultural mission with a larger program of political and social transformation . . ." (63).

Something exciting might have been expected from Brooks' political turn, but much of it seems to have been a failure. This may have been due to the fact that he flirted with Fabianism — one of the most technocratic and elitist forms of socialism. Although, as Blake points out, H.G. Wells had developed a "voluntarist defense of ethics and consciousness" (110), which attracted Brooks, his brand of socialism quickly turned sour: "Brooks was notably silent about the undemocratic nature of [Wells'] theory of socialist transformation. Nor was he aware of its close affinities with the technocratic collectivism he criticized in Fabian thought" (110). Even in regards to cultural theory, Brooks' balance sheet is mixed. Blake revives Brooks' insightful "radical traditionalism" (139). Here Brooks forged a romantic critique of capitalism based on craft production — an idea he garnered from thinkers like William Morris. But as Brooks criticized America for being too awestruck by modern, capitalist development, which allegedly prevented Americans from developing an indigenous, populist culture, his complaints wore thin: "Too often, [Brooks'] stirring calls to ground culture and personality in a common tradition gave way to empty appeals for a new Goethe to create an American identity out of the thin air of modernity. In its treatment of its own historical antecedents, Brooks' criticism was as much an example as an indictment of his country's cultural rootlessness" (143).

If Brooks' path was questionable, Randolph Bourne, who never fully bought into Brooks' and Frank's aestheticism and mysticism, provides a better model

5. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981), p. xix. Lears critically examines Susman's pioneering account of the transition from "character" to "personality" in American cultural history. See Warren Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon, 1984).

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for Blake. In the first place, Bourne was well-grounded in Dewey's theory of democracy as concrete experience and discussion within communities (86-88). Although Bourne put too much faith in intellectuals as prefiguring the future good life, he also appreciated "the folk cultures of the 'new immigrants' from central and eastern Europe" (116), whose lifestyles he saw threatened by the burgeoning culture industry. Bourne's idealization of these communities was not simply romanticism, but a way to ground a politics of "decentralist pluralism" (119). Here is the strongest evidence that the Young Americans had a vision of federalized communities struggling to determine their own politics and cultural life. This was Bourne's ideal when he called for a "Trans-national America."

Bourne was a multifaceted thinker, and Blake pays attention to this diversity. He is critical of Bourne's dream of establishing a Comtean church headed by a "scientific priesthood" (82), but not of some of the other, problematic political theories Bourne developed, such as the modeling of participatory democracy on the ideal of friendship. "Bourne was groping toward a unitary model of democratic community in which the bonds of friendship reinforced citizens' devotion to the common good" (70). Although he cites Aristotle, and shows concern for the conformity implicit in friendship, Blake is not critical here of the *apolitical* side of friendship. A communitarian politics cannot be grounded in the ideal of friendship, for unlike the latter, communities are not freely chosen. Real communities develop by consolidating internally and in response to outside forces such as capitalism and the state. To base communities on friendship is to miss the point that there are differences within communities, that communities are not necessarily always based on shared values. A contemporary of Bourne, Mary Parker Follett, understood this. She wanted a localized participatory democracy, but she did not see neighborhoods, which she designated as the seats of power, as homogeneous or stagnant: "The satisfaction and contentment that comes with sameness indicates a meager personality. . . . In a neighborhood group you have the stimulus and the bracing effect of many different experiences and ideals. And in this infinite variety which touches you on every side, you have a life which enriches and enlarges and fecundates . . ."[6] Follett's vision is closer to a communitarian and participatory democracy than Bourne's "intellectual camaraderie." Blake should have dealt more fully with these problems in relation to some of the less technocratic elements in Bourne's thought, for any communitarian politics must have a sense of what communities really are.

In any case, Bourne's outlook led him to become the most trenchant critic of Dewey's support of WWI. This is important, for as Blake shows, Bourne's criticism of Dewey was not like the Frankfurt School's later dismissal of pragmatism.

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6. Mary Parker Follett, *The New State: Group Organization, The Solution of Popular Government* (Gloucester: Peter Smith Publishers, 1965 [Originally published in 1918]), pp. 196-97. Follett also had a vision of federated communities, and, like Bourne, she had her own faith in technocracy which contradicts the more democratic side of her political vision.

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In fact, it was an immanent critique. Although Bourne worried about Dewey's philosophy becoming technical and catering to power, he did not give up pragmatism's critical insights. As Blake explains, "Bourne, Brooks, and Frank argued that Dewey's definition of *experience* was too narrow, that it failed to encompass the imagination as well as the intellect. . . . Their alternative was a highly subjectivist pragmatism that gave as much — and, on occasion, more — weight to the claims of love, intuition, art, and spirit in a critical philosophy of experience as it did to the deliberative reason and open communications that Dewey stressed" (158). Unfortunately, although Bourne developed an interesting critique of pragmatism, he became increasingly bitter about the intellectuals' public role as he saw them vying for power during the war. Bourne died in 1918, leaving a questionable yet potentially critical legacy.

Although he had a different critique of Dewey, it was Lewis Mumford who stepped into Bourne's shoes. In many ways, Mumford originated later misreadings of pragmatism in his book, *The Golden Day*, in which he took on James and Dewey. Blake shows that "Mumford lashed out against his pragmatic elders in a one-sided polemic that had none of the nuances of Bourne's earlier attacks" (221). Thus Mumford began the subsequent tradition which "neglected those elements of pragmatism . . . about the relation of culture to social experience" (225). By showing what Mumford missed, Blake rescues a critique of pragmatism without losing its insights.

Mumford adopted both Bourne's political outlook and his intellectual tensions. Following the Scottish social thinker, Patrick Geddes, he developed a theory of cultural organicism and regionalism. The latter was at the heart of Mumford's thoughts on the cities and fueled a vision of local, participatory democracy: "Geddes' chief legacy to Mumford's theory of cultural renewal was his belief that the task awaiting modern societies was one of reworking an entire way of life — creating, in effect, a new civilization — so as to enrich individual personality and recover local bonds of association" (191). Regionalist thought was very critical of statist encroachment and generated an interesting critique of city life. Accordingly, the only good life in the city was to be found in localities dealing with problems engendered by urbanism.

There was also a technocratic side to Mumford. Geddes had taken much from Comte and bought into centralized social planning (195-96). Mumford accepted this and played an active role during the 1920s in the Regional Planning Association of America. Although he should not be blamed for the stultifying atmosphere of the contemporary "garden cities" he supported, Blake is correct in seeing anti-democratic implications in planning efforts: what was "[a]t stake . . . was the difference between democratic localism and a pluralism of planning agencies. In looking to culture for alternative sources of power to the state, culturism ran the risk of sacrificing the civic culture of democracy to the authority of a mobilized intelligentsia" (205). In the early 1930s Mumford's thought took a turn for the worse. At that time he became increasingly attracted to the social sciences and planning, even embracing the "new systems of work

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discipline pioneered by Frederick Winslow Taylor and Elton Mayo . . ." (285). Although he retained something from his earlier theory of regionalism, which eventually led him to celebrate "human scale," his support for Taylorism tarnished his credentials as a democratic social critic.

Throughout his book, Blake emphasizes the tension between these thinkers' technocratic and democratic aspirations. He tries to imagine a Brooksian critique of Brooks, taking great pains to point out where the Young Americans went wrong. At times, however, the book merely recounts the Young Americans' thought and provides a criticism from the hindsight of later intellectual history. Blake is at his best when he demonstrates Geddes' influence on Mumford and the Young Americans' frustrations in dealing with American politics (especially during WWI). Here he explains why Mumford was both a technocrat and a democrat, and why much of the Young Americans' thought deteriorated into a romantic, sometimes elitist defense of intellectuals. At other times, the tension in their thought is criticized but not explained. The potential for communitarianism to degenerate into a pseudo-populism guided by a self-interested, intellectual vanguard is an important issue. Had Blake explained why some of these thinkers drifted in this direction, it would have been more helpful than simply summarizing their ideas. But this should not detract from Blake's project: forging an immanent critique of American society. He concludes: "The fundamental lesson of the Young Americans' analysis of industrial culture is that the creation of personal identity, the reconstruction of a public language, and the enrichment of practical activity must proceed together" (302). This book will play an important role in the emergence of a communitarian, democratic theory of politics grounded in the American past with an eye toward the American future.

Kevin Mattson

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Weber on Russia

Max Weber, *Zur Russischen Revolution von 1905: Schriften und Reden 1905-1912*, Edited by Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Dittmar Dahlmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1989), Vol. 10 of the *Max Weber Gesamtausgabe*, 855 pp.

Following his sojourn in America in 1904, Max Weber turned his attention to the other emerging world power mentioned in Alexis de Tocqueville's great prognosis at the conclusion of the first volume of *Democracy in America*. In his speech at the International Exposition in St. Louis in 1904 he had, like Tocqueville, noted that the US had no aristocracy, which meant "the tensions caused by the contrast between authoritarian tradition and the purely commercial character of modern economic conditions" did not exist. Industrial capitalism had taken its seat in the West, and particularly in the US, but had "stopped at the Russian frontier."[1]

In 1905 Weber became fascinated by the revolution taking place in Russia. He learned Russian, consulted with Russian emigrès, and wrote two large monographs, which he called "chronicles," a kind of political journalism. His goal was to educate the German public as to the events taking place in Russia, but these events outstripped his ability to keep up with them and the German public largely ignored his efforts.[2] At that time in Germany, the rule was *Russica non leguntur*, meaning that Russian matters were not even dealt with in university curriculae. The general public was even less informed, and the events of 1905 were over before they captured much attention. Understandably disappointed that his monographs had not fulfilled their immediate purpose, Weber never revised them and opposed their republication because he thought they had no lasting value. They have long been out of print, at least in their complete form,

1. Max Weber, "Capitalism and Rural Sociology in Germany," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 385 and 380 respectively.

2. The only notice that was taken at the time was by Russian intellectuals and radicals, Lenin among them. It is not known whether Lenin read the German original or the Russian translation of Weber's first monograph, which appeared shortly after its publication. See Maks Veber, *Istoricheskii ocherk osvoboditel'nogo dvizheniia v Rossii i polozhenia burzhuaznoi demokratii* (Kiev: I.I. Chokolov, 1906). Lenin took issue with Weber's characterization of the December insurrection as the Moscow "putsch" and disparaged his belief that it was only a narrowly plotted conspiracy. See Lenin, "Ein Vortrag über die Revolutionsbewegung im Jahre 1905," in *Leninskii sbornik*, No. 5 (Moscow: 1926), p. 46.

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perhaps because his judgment was shared by others. They have now been republished, together with related documents, in a massive volume.[3]

The main relevance today of these monographs is not the inflation of Weber's reputation or those of academic Weberians but the timing of their republication. Not only are there striking parallels between the revolutionary events that took place in the Russian Empire at the beginning of this century and those that are taking place in the Soviet Empire at its end; Weber's own idiosyncratic liberalism, his concern with "bourgeois democracy" and the transition to "sham constitutionalism" shed some light on the present situation. First, however, it might be useful to consider the relation between Weber's writings on America and Russia.

Other than his article on "The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism,"[4] Weber never devoted any other writing specifically to the US. But there is little doubt that *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* owes much to his understanding of America. He considered that work a "scientific" essay, as compared with his articles on Russia. However, since in most of Weber's writings the distinction between what is "scientific" and "political" is a methodological fiction, there is some material on Russian religious institutions in his second article on the 1905 Revolution. He intended to include a study of Eastern Christianity in his sociology of religion,[5] but became bogged down in his work on *Economy and Society*, where one finds references and comments that might have been included in that study.[6] Be that as it may, his major writings on

3. Max Weber, "Zur Lage der bürgerlichen Demokratie in Russland" and "Russlands Übergang zum Scheinkonstitutionalismus," pp. 86-279 and 293-684 respectively. Sociologists have not known quite what to do with Weber's articles. Two studies have been published: David Beetham, "Society, Class and State: Russia" in Beetham, *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*, second edition (Cambridge, England and New York: Polity Press, 1985), pp. 183-214: and Lawrence A. Scaff and Thomas Clay Arnold, "Class and the Theory of History: Marx on France and Weber on Russia," in Robert J. Antonio and Ronald M. Glassman, eds., *A Marx-Weber Dialogue* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985), pp. 190-214. The only Russian historian who has devoted any attention to Weber's two monographs is Richard Pipes: "Max Weber and Russia," in *World Politics*, Vol. III, No. 7 (April 1955), pp. 371-401. The explanatory notes by the editors of this volume of the *Gesamtausgabe* are helpful in unpacking Weber's dense prose and convoluted arguments, and their introduction is useful if not particularly insightful. There are, however, some incorrect dates, and not all the glossary entries are up to standard. The chronological overview of the events in Russia from June 1902 to July 1906 (pp. 55-60) is also inadequate. For example, it lists Lenin's return to Russia from European exile, popular uprisings, strikes and mutinies, but fails to outline Sergei Witte's conferences with the leaders of the intelligentsia.

4. *From Max Weber*, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-22.

5. A sophomoric attempt has recently been made to apply Weber's approach to Russia by Andreas Buss, *Die Wirtschaftsethik des russisch-orthodoxen Christentums* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1989). Given the limitations of Buss' attempt, it is unlikely that the effort would have been improved had he known Russian.

6. Cf. Max Weber, "Dortselbst, Erste Diskussionsrede zu E. Troeltschs Vortrag über 'Das stoisch-christliche Naturrecht'," in Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und*

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Russia were intentionally more "political" than "scientific."

The situation in the Russian Empire in 1905 and that in the Soviet Empire in 1991 exhibit the following similarities: costly defeat in an unpopular imperialist war with a small and supposedly weaker Asian foe (Japan then, Afghanistan now), growing unrest among reform-minded bureaucrats and intellectuals, confusion and reaction within the managerial New Class, widespread popular unrest among the poor, separatist pressures from nations subordinated to the central imperial authority, startling projects for extensive change directed by the political leadership and the splintering of both official and public activists into factions. The attempt to solve the 1905 crisis was no less state-directed than in 1991, and in both cases a solution was sought in the introduction of capitalism. Then, as now, the revolution planned and executed from above caught the imagination of the people below, who called for democracy. Then, the prospects for democracy could not be realized without either restricting or removing the Tsar. Now, they could not be divorced from the removal of the Communist Party. For this reason, the chances for democracy in Russia are greater in 1991 than they were in 1905.

The 1905 Russian Revolution may be one of the least understood events in Russian history, although it is the key event in the two major interpretations of the history of revolutionary Russia. According to the "Marxist-Leninist" interpretation, the first "revolutionary situation" in Russia occurred at the time of the emancipation of the serfs in 1861; the second, in connection with the assassination of Alexander II in 1881. The first real revolution was in 1905; the second, the so-called "bourgeois revolution" in February 1917; and finally, the October revolution that brought communism to power. The collapse of communism has not only made this interpretation superfluous, it has served to strengthen the second major interpretation of revolutionary Russia, the one to which Weber subscribed,[7] namely that it was the "failure of liberalism" that caused the

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Sozialpolitik (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1924), pp. 466ff. Parenthetically, a recent German reviewer of Weber's correspondence has drawn attention to Weber's comments on Russian Christianity at the first German Sociological Conference in Frankfurt in 1910, noting that Weber quotes not only the great Russian historian, Vladimir Solov'ev, but also the founder of Slavophilism, Alexei Khomiakov, in connection with his assertion that the Puritan sects belong to Ferdinand Toennies' concept of "society," whereas the concept of the church in Russian Christianity belongs to "community." Cf Hubert Treiber, "Die Geburt der Weberschen Rationalismus — These aus dem Geist der russische Geschichtsphilosophie," in *Leviathan* (1991), No. 3. More to the point, it is suggested that Weber was influenced in his conception of the specific character of occidental culture by the Slavophile notion of the distinction between the "West" and Russia, which became the guiding thesis of his sociology of religion. Treiber bases this hypothesis on Weber's relations with Feodor Steppuhn and Bogdan Kiistiakovsky.

7. Weber called Russian liberalism a "splendid movement," but compared it to the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848-49, which marked the apex of liberalism in Germany. This assessment was much more realistic than that of French observers. See Encaracion Alzona, *Some French Contemporary Opinions of the Russian Revolution of 1905* (New York: Columbia University Studies in History, Economic and Public Law, 1921),

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revolution to fail in 1905, and that it is the victory of liberalism that has led to the overthrow the communist regime.[8] Given the seemingly strengthened validity of this claim as well as its wide-spread popularity, Weber's monographs serve a useful purpose in demonstrating that this view is no less dubious than that of Marxism-Leninism. To give Weber due credit, his emphasis on the self-interested role of Western as well as Russian capitalists in blocking as well as undermining the forces of liberalism and democracy are instructive in cautioning those who now presume that these interests will harmoniously proceed with the transformation of social and political life.

Weber was convinced that the agricultural crisis in Russia lay at the root of all other crises. This is the focus of his first monograph: the situation of "bourgeois democracy" in Russia, where he analyzed the latent conflicts between the interests of peasants and the propertied classes. This conflict made it difficult to meet the economic demands of the former without jeopardizing the political demands of the latter. He was correct that the peasants sought land in the spirit of the traditional commune rather than in that of liberal individualism, and he was certain that the development of urban capitalism would only strengthen the peasants in their agrarian communism. It would create an industrial proletariat, but would not strengthen the bourgeoisie as a political force. Since Russian liberalism was an *intellectual* rather than an *economic* movement, he consistently spoke of the "bourgeois intelligentsia." Having long lamented the apolitical character of German liberalism and the political immaturity of German popular culture, he decried comparable circumstances in Russia. He claimed that Russian liberals should not miss any chance, however sordid and compromised, to become politically involved. At the same time, he recognized that the Russian government would rather conclude a pact with the devil than with autonomous political forces. In fact, the Russian government had already struck a deal with foreign banks, which were withholding loans unless liberal institutional reforms were put into effect. But once the government had secured the necessary financing from foreign banks, it no longer had any need of the Russian liberals. In Weber's view, the Russian liberals had lost their chance to take political power. For this reason, in his second monograph, he concluded that the result of the 1905 Revolution would be "sham constitutionalism."

Weber predicted that only an unsuccessful war with Europe could topple the Russian autocracy. Unlike the English, the French and the American revolutions, the February 1917 Russian Revolution presumed to establish a democratic government the moment the Tsar fell from power.[9] In Weber's articles on the

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p. 73. By comparison, English observers had a more profound grasp of the situation than Weber. See Maurice Baring, *What I Saw in Russia* (New York: T. Nelson & Sons, 1913); and Bernard Pares, *Russia and Reform* (New York E.P. Dutton, 1907).

8. For a critique of these recently resurrected notions of "civil society," see Paul Piccone, "Paradoxes of *Perestroika*," in *Telos* 84 (Summer 1990), pp. 3-32; and Moishe Gonzales, "Exorcising *Perestroika*," in *Telos* 81 (Fall 1989), pp. 150-51.

9. In Alexander Kerensky's words, it "marked the end of a long and painful trail

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February 1917 Russian Revolution he was still of the opinion, as he was in 1905, that no successful mass revolt was possible without the Russian "bourgeois intelligentsia," i.e., the liberals.[10] Again he drew attention to the failure of the liberals to find an accommodation with radical democracy. On the one hand, the masses wanted the reform but not the overthrow of the autocracy; on the other, the liberals wanted the overthrow of the autocracy but did not want to increase the workers' power. Drawing a parallel to the situation in and immediately following 1905, when the pressure of foreign banks forced the Tsar to give the newly-created Russian parliament the illusion of power until he had time to reestablish autocratic rule, Weber argued that if the new regime installed in February 1917 was able to obtain foreign credits it could then decide which form of "sham democracy" it wanted. It was obvious to him that such "super-reactionary" representatives of big capital could not constitute authentic democracy. It did not matter to anyone in Germany, said Weber, whether Russian imperialism was despotic, liberal or socialist, so long as it paid its bills. From "sham constitutionalism" to "sham democracy," Russian liberals could not get their act together. The question remains, whether the fate of constitutionalism and democracy in Russia either in 1905 or in 1917, or in fact in 1991, was and/or is fundamentally one of the failure of liberalism either as an *intellectual* or an *economic* force or: Does constitutional democracy rest on more popular foundations, which did not yet exist in 1905 or even 1917, but do exist in 1991? In 1905, the quasi-religious veneration of the Tsar on the part of the majority of Russians that had existed for millennia was still by and large intact. Although shaken in 1917, the Russian autocracy would not have toppled without the war. The Bolshevik coup overthrew the first more or less "democratic" government in Russia, but this government had yet to find its popular support. Following the civil war and the NEP, the main consolidation of Soviet power under Stalin was accomplished by the divination of Lenin and by attempting to endow the Communist Party and its General Secretary with the same kind of aura that the autocracy and the Tsar once held. When this ultimately proved inadequate, nationalism was used for public support. But even these ideological fictions were ultimately undermined by the sheer opportunism and barbarism of New Class Party bureaucrats.

No more than in 1905 or in 1917 can the recent Russian "revolution" be attributed to either the failure or the success of liberalism, and certainly not of democracy. Weber's own attitude toward the Russian liberals in the Provisional Government following the February 1917 Revolution was that liberalism is no international movement either for capitalism or democracy. Since Germany and

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from pure absolutism to absolute democracy." Quoted in Donald W. Treadgold, *Twentieth Century Russia* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1959), p. 125.

10. Max Weber, "Russlands Übergang zur Scheindemokratie" and "Die russische Revolution und der Friede," in Weber, *Zur Politik im Weltkrieg: Schriften und Reden 1914-1918*, edited by Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Gangolf Hubinger (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1984), pp. 238-60 and 291-97 respectively.

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Russia were on opposite sides of the war, his analysis of the situation in Russia was colored by his own nationalism. Because of this, he saw that the chances for democracy had less to do with the failure of liberalism than with the situation of liberals in the wider context. Given the reactionary elements in the Provisional Government, where large landholding interests played a dominant role, the first order of business of what he now called the "imperialist bourgeoisie" was to consolidate power. To this end, it was necessary to pursue two courses of action: first, hold down the peasants and postpone the division of large private landholdings; second, obtain foreign credit. The first could only be done with the help of the army; the second could only be obtained from domestic or foreign banks and big industrialists. As Weber observed, the super-reactionary representatives of heavy industry, the leaders of foreign trade organizations, and the banks would neither support ideas of freedom nor calls for credit without guarantees that they would not lose their money — and money, said Weber, was what was needed to keep the "democratic" peasants in line. In the final analysis, there could be no authentic democracy in Russia without the free vote of the peasants, who would demand the expropriation of the land, the elimination of foreign debt, and peace — which would of course aid the German war effort.

Reiterating his strong sympathies for Russian emancipation, Weber claimed that the recent change of government in Russia was neither democratic nor federal, and this was particularly evident in the Provisional Government's "double dealing" policy with respect to the conduct of the war. On March 27 the Petrograd Soviet had issued a "Manifesto to the Peoples of the World" that tried to harmonize the views of those who favored continuing the war and those who wanted to end it, which, among other things, employed the formula "peace without annexations and indemnities." Since Weber considered the Peace Resolution of the Central Powers "not only honorable . . . but absolutely correct politically,"[11] his attitude toward the Provisional Government was colored by the fact that Germany and Russia were on opposite sides of the war. His strategy for peace was consistent with the majority of the Provisional Government, which wanted no "annexations and indemnities" but only treaties of disarmament and arbitration. Nevertheless, he argued that the majority was not only imperialist but uninterested in democracy and federalism. What they really wanted was a "plutocratic monarchy" (*à la* Louis Phillipe) in which the bourgeoisie would retain power because it was not yet fully legitimate. Weber was referring to the fact that the Provisional Government insisted it could not use its power until a constituent assembly was convened, and such was being continually postponed. At the same time, the Petrograd Soviet insisted that it could not exercise its power because only a "bourgeois revolution" had taken place and that the power should be exercised by bourgeois liberals. An absurd situation to be sure, but one that showed the weaknesses of both the liberals and the communists.

11. Weber, "Russlands Übergang zur Scheindemokratie," *op. cit.*, p. 238.

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Weber's analysis of the Provisional Government seemed to play into the hands of the more radical factions. He recognized this danger, since he emphasized that many Social Democrats were also not seriously committed to the peasant program and that, just as in 1905, the real hopes of the peasants appeared utopian and reactionary to Marxists such as Plekhanov. Socialist leaders could obtain concessions from a "bourgeois" government, but not from a peasant "constituency"; and as long as the war lasted, they could not organize a strong administration without the "bourgeoisie" because they could not secure the needed credit from bourgeois governments abroad. Thus: "The decisive question of war or peace does not lie with them [the Social Democrats and the Social Revolutionaries], but with the propertied classes, the [military] officers and the *banks*."[12]

Weber was wrong in insisting that what took place in Russia in February 1917 was not a genuine "revolution" but simply the "dismissal" of an ungifted monarch, even if half the real power remained in the hands of the monarchists. It was even too harsh to characterize it as a "republican" swindle because truly "democratic" elements — peasants, laborers, industrial workers and "others *outside* the war industry" — were excluded. He left open the possibility that the "republic" might assume an authentic form in the long run, but for the present he focused on "bourgeois" members of the Provisional Government who, once they received the needed credit, would use the military to get rid of their socialist fellow travelers. He also raised the critical question of nationalities, and referred particularly to the "truly democratic program" of the Ukrainian Liberation Movement, whose main objective was the guarantee of greater rights not only for Ukrainians but for all non-Russian nationalities. What was proposed was a free federation with a federal parliament, which would only formally control autonomous provincial assemblies and public authorities. Although the Provisional Government had not rejected a program of equality for nationalities, it had not taken a position on autonomy. Weber thereby concluded that as long as this "bourgeois" government remained in power, democracy would be strictly limited, and not only owing to the fact that imperialist members of the parliament still hoped to dominate Russia through a bureaucracy and an officer corps drawn from the propertied classes. Intimating that this had always been true of Russian rulers, Weber's main emphasis was on the fact that the members of the Provisional Government owed their power to the banks.

In light of recent events in the Soviet Union, some of Weber's observations, particularly with respect to the 1905 Revolution, have turned out to be unusually prophetic. He saw that the "unyielding logic of the system"[13] was

12. *Ibid.*, p. 294.

13. Cf. Klaus Froelich, *The Emergence of Russian Constitutionalism 1900-1904: The Relationship between Social Mobilization and Political Group Formation in Pre-Revolutionary Russia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), p. 177. Following war and revolution, the Soviet state still recruited peasants into the apparatus without fundamentally changing the old tsarist political machine. See Don K. Rowney, *Transition to Technocracy: The Structural Organs of the Soviet Administrative State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

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such that the state was not beholden to any particular group. On the contrary, all groups were beholden to the state. The central bone of contention was neither land nor property but the power of the state. The battle lines were drawn not along conventional economic divisions but rather between defenders and opponents of the autocracy. Furthermore, Weber detected an affinity between revolutionaries and state bureaucrats. He noted "the relative frequency of the 'transformation' of extremely radical students into highly 'authoritarian' officials and from supporters of bureaucracy . . . to the extreme Social-Revolutionary camp" (231). What united these apparent extremes was their "state socialist character" and their "yearning for the 'deed' that is subservient to the absolute social-ethical norm and . . . oscillates between the 'creative' deed from 'above' and 'below' " (231). In this connection, Weber perceived that in an environment largely untouched by the post-1789 *bourgeois* institutional revolution, the politics of those like Plekhanov and Lenin militated against authentic constitutional government. The real Russian bourgeoisie, i.e., the wealthy capital-owning industrialists and financiers, were neither sufficiently numerous nor resolute to have an independent impact. Most important, Russian capitalists always took the side of the bureaucratic state, which had created them for its own purposes. Clearly, the prospects for "bourgeois democracy" were bleak if the "bourgeoisie" was not itself in favor of it. Russia had jumped "into the middle of the modern form of economic struggle without repeating any of the intermediate stages of Western development" (560). By passing over the liberal stage of capitalism and proceeding directly to that advanced stage which is, if anything, anti-liberal, the Russian autocracy had sacrificed the interests of a Western-style bourgeois future. Thus in Russia both revolutionaries and bankers could conspire separately towards the same status goals.

As Weber saw it, true democrats in Russia were "swimming against the stream" of material developments. Most important in view of recent developments is his claim that advanced capitalism does not necessarily promote democracy. He concluded that the spread of Western culture and capitalist economy to Russia did not *ipso facto* guarantee that Russia would also acquire the liberties born out of "unique" and "perhaps unrepeatable" circumstances in Western Europe (e.g., overseas expansion, Cromwell's rule, the French Constituent Assembly, and the totality of European economic development). When he praised capitalism, he had in mind a form of economic behavior emphasizing self-reliance, responsibility, independence and risk, such as he had analyzed in *The Protestant Ethic*. He meant a system of *doers* rather than of *owners*. He had more respect for entrepreneurs and industrialists than for bankers and financiers, and he intimated that those "progressive" Western bankers and diplomats who were pressing for constitutional reforms in Russia were less interested in liberal democracy than in capital accumulation. Their interests, like those of Russian capitalists, were best served by weakening the hand of the "only merchant in Moscow" (as Nicholas II's ancestor, Ivan the Terrible, once called himself) and thereby opening up greater opportunities for profit-making (273).

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Much as the advanced capitalists in the West were then seeking to loosen the Russian autocrat's near monopoly of the capital wealth of the Russian Empire and to "open doors" for their enrichment, so today Western capitalists as well as governments are avid fans of economic development and the "march of democracy" in the expiring Soviet Empire.

In his article on "sham democracy" in Russia following the February 1917 Revolution, Weber observed that the Tsar had had to choose between *real* power to exercise greater influence in the affairs of his own state and *sham* power to demonstrate his ostensible capacity for the conduct of politics, not the least the war. He chose the latter, and there was no legislative power to oppose him in his unwise decision. Then, too, the conservative circles of the Russian propertied classes had become supporters of parliamentarism only during the war, and the Tsar did not decide to share power with them until the last moment. By then it was already too late. In like manner, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had to make the same choice and also chose the latter. It did not decide until the last moment to share power with advocates of change, and many Party bureaucrats only became supporters of change when the crisis was already at hand. In 1991, as in 1905, there was a hamstrung government, a movement for democracy composed of social elements of various antagonistic economic interests, a mass of dissatisfied workers and peasants, rising nationality conflicts, etc. — all of which had little or nothing to do respectively with the failure or success of liberalism. In 1905, the "unyielding logic of the system" was still too strong. In February 1917, it was weakened but the forces aligned against it did not prove strong enough to change it fundamentally. In October 1917, the Bolsheviks reconstituted the logic of the system with a vengeance. As Lenin said of the Soviet State apparatus shortly before his death, "to a large extent [it is] the survival of the old one. . . . It is only slightly repainted on the surface."[14] In 1991, it appears that the logic of the system has collapsed under its own weight. Whether true constitutionalism and democracy takes its place remains to be seen.

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14. Vladimir Ilych Lenin, *Sobranie Sochineniia*, 4th ed., 35 Vols. (Moscow: 1941-50), Vol. XXXIII, p. 440. See also p. 404: "Our apparatus . . . which we took over in its entirety from the preceeding epoch."

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Sachlichkeit *and Self-Revelation: Max Weber's Letters*

Max Weber, *Briefe 1906-1908. Abteilung II*, Vol. 5, *Max Weber Gesamtausgabe*, ed. by M. Rainer Lepsius and Wolfgang J. Mommsen in collaboration with Birgit Rudhard and Manfred Schön (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1990), 796 pp.

Max Weber was not a great letter writer. As in his scholarly *oeuvre*, he wrote pragmatically, paying little attention to style and form. He did not aspire to a high literary standard, and certainly did not write his letters for posthumous collection. Usually he did not try out or elaborate his thoughts in correspondence. He preferred to be brief, if not blunt, in expressing criticism and disagreement, but he also showed diplomatic finesse in academic politics. If necessary, he would coax and cajole. With some significant exceptions, letters were for him no vehicle for profession or confession, and he almost never turned intimate. Only relatives are addressed by their first names, and the familiar case (*Du*) is never used for outsiders. Weber apparently did not have *Duzfreunde* in a culture in which affirming close friendship by crossing the barrier from formal to familiar address was so important. "Dear Rickert" (or Jaffé or Sombart) is already intimate and only topped by "dear friend" for Friedrich Naumann and Robert Michels. Even letters to his mother sometimes deteriorated into train schedules, as he himself noticed ruefully at one point (75).[1] He left the regular monthly reports to his wife (this important biographical source, however, will not be part of the *Gesamtausgabe*).

In spite of Weber's reticence, the nature and number of the letters reveal much about his personality and state of mind. Even the many dashed-off postcards, mostly to Marianne, with their stereotyped phrasing and repetitive everyday information, sharpen the familiar picture of a tortured mind and body. Weber comes across as a man in a hurry, for whom the few hours when he could work were precious. The letters also document in detail how periods of frantic productivity alternated with periods of enforced inactivity and planned idleness. Once he managed to immerse himself in a project, however, he tended to lose all sense of proportion. Hence the legacy of overgrown, but ultimately fragmentary manuscripts.

1. Page references are mostly illustrative, not exhaustive. Since there is no subject index, references may be helpful here.

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This long-awaited first volume of correspondence in the *Gesamtausgabe* appeared in 1990 and received the prestigious Amalfi prize in 1991. Containing only Weber's own communications, it covers the three years from 1906 through 1908 and is volume 5 of a projected ten-volume collection. It comprises about 400 items to 45 recipients, of whom two thirds are academic colleagues. There are no notes to Marianne Weber in 1906, but 41 in 1907 and 77 in 1908. Since Marianne published a selection of Max' letters from 1876 to 1893 under the title *Jugendbriefe* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1936), it appeared uneconomical to start at the chronological beginning. The choice of the years 1906-08 had to do with the uses to which letters to and fro have been put within the critical edition. They help elucidate the often unclear origins and dates of some of the manuscripts — a relatively difficult problem for the years before WWI. Specifically, the opaque history of *Economy and Society* needs clarification, since it is far from easy to establish when major parts of the aggregated opus were composed. The situation is similar for "The Economic Ethics of the World Religions." The second volume of correspondence, which will go to 1911 (and is nearing completion), will be even more important for understanding Weber's and the publisher's ambitious project of the *Handbook of Political Economy* (later called *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*), of which *Economy and Society* became an ever more proliferating part. Fortunately, the correspondence with Paul and Oskar Siebeck of the famous publishing house of J.C.B. Mohr — still a Siebeck family enterprise today — has been largely preserved. We now learn that first consultations to replace the outdated *Handbook of Political Economy* edited by Gustav von Schönberg date back to 1906 and that Paul Siebeck first asked Weber for a completely new one as early as August 1908.

This first volume should put to rest exaggerated expectations. The correspondence contains almost no revelations or "sensations" and will not significantly alter what is known about Weber. It will, however, provide much more with which to work. In a sense, this is doubly reassuring: previous knowledge was by and large adequate, and this new material directly confirms, in Weber's own words, much of what was more or less known or guessed, without the filter provided by Marianne Weber and other well-known interpreters. Readers can now be reasonably sure of what is available for a given time span and can confidently cite texts rendered as accurate as humanly possible. Many previously published passages were marred by transcription errors or lack of context.

In order to guard against charges of selectivity, such as have been leveled particularly against Marianne Weber and Eduard Baumgarten, the editors prudently decided to publish every scrap of correspondence, no matter how trivial. This is especially true of the many short notes, mostly postcards, to Marianne. There is, however, another cogent reason for publishing everything within reach — the very fact that important parts of the correspondence have been lost, apparently irretrievably. This is true especially of the correspondence with Georg Simmel and Werner Sombart, but also with brother

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Alfred and such scholars as Carl Neumann, Wilhelm Windelband, Franz Eulenburg and Robert Liefmann. Not one letter to Simmel seems to have survived from this period. There is, however, much to read on Simmel, the person and the work, and on the persistent institutional anti-Semitism in the universities. Here Weber acquits himself well.

The senior editors and their associates, Birgit Rudhard and Manfred Schön, who did most of the spade work, conducted a comprehensive if often frustrating search, without being able to preclude the possibility of future discoveries. The reader, of course, will hope for further lucky finds in unlikely quarters, no matter how inconvenient for the editors' chronological procedure. (At the last moment brief letters to Bogdan Kiistiakovski and Alexander Kaufmann were finally released from Leningrad and Moscow.) Addenda will appear at the end of the series.

The extant letters consist of originals in Weber's almost illegible handwriting or of copies of varying reliability. Whereas Weber and the typesetters of his manuscripts feuded openly with one another, especially in the case of the Russian "chronicles," ordinary recipients had to put up with what he considered a regrettable but also irremediable handicap (123). Sometimes he apologized for his poor handwriting, attributing it in one instance (a letter to the psychopathologist Willy Hellpach) to "increased nervous tension in springtime" (83) — apparently without the slightest hint of self-irony. During the period there is the first mention of a male typist (624, 631), to whom Weber dictated in the afternoon what he had composed in the morning, but that did not affect the correspondence. By 1908 the Webers and Jaffés also had a telephone, and that cut down on routine notes (627).

What did Weber accomplish during the three years from 1906 to 1908? When the Russian Revolution erupted in 1905, he at first held hopes similar to those that were entertained in the early phases of *perestroika*. His exciting American venture of 1904 and *The Protestant Ethic* behind him, he tried eagerly to study the other emergent world power, quickly adding Russian to his knowledge of English. In February and August of 1906 he published his two lengthy "chronicles" (totalling 350 pages) on the situation of bourgeois democracy and on the transition to sham constitutionalism in Russia; they were not meant to be scholarly contributions (30). During the same months he also managed to write and then expand his brief essay on "Churches and Sects" (77), but he interrupted or delayed his "methodological" studies (69), although during that period the essays on Roscher and Knies, Eduard Meyer, Rudolf Stammler and Lujo Brentano (578) appeared. He also found time to study various aspects of industrial work, another new venture (382f., 404, 674). Rallying to the lost causes of Robert Michels and Georg Simmel, he contributed polemically to issues of academic freedom (*Lehrfreiheit*) and political control in the German universities. In the winter of 1907-08 he rewrote his short ten-year-old *Agrarian Conditions in Antiquity* until it grew into a comprehensive, if unwieldy social and economic history (426, 430, 478, 568). A plan

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to revise *The Protestant Ethic* in the wake of the critiques by Karl Fischer and Felix Rachfahl and his own critical rejoinders did not come to fruition at the time (cf. 273, 276, 285, 609), although he did more research in the Netherlands (361ff., 384). We should also not forget the close supervision and detailed editorial help (89, 158) he gave Marianne in the writing of her major study on *Wife and Mother in Legal Development* (1907) — all in all, a considerable achievement for a man who continued to be in highly precarious physical and mental health and for whom 1907 was a particularly bad year.

The correspondence allows us to put Weber's writings in the context of his basic commitments as well as his everyday life, taking us from the most principled to the most trivial statements. From early on — February 5, 1906 — dates the remarkable self-revelation that bares some of the personal motivation behind the writing of *The Protestant Ethic*: ". . . that our nation has never in any way experienced the school of hard asceticism . . . this is the source of all that I find hateful in it (as in myself)" (33). This often-quoted statement can now be read as part of a carefully balanced diplomatic answer to Adolf Harnack's response to the work. In general, however, the letters articulate value commitments less on the "methodological" and political levels than on the professional and personal levels. Time and again, responding to many requests for evaluations, Weber not only applies rigorous standards but also painstakingly balances the strengths and weaknesses of a person. Even more strikingly, many letters vividly demonstrate his ability to combine the sharpest scholarly and even personal criticism with conciliatory and friendly reassurance. An outstanding example is his treatment of the irascible grandseigneur Lujo Brentano, long-time political friend and foe, over a remark with anti-Semitic implications (643f., 688f.). Sharply critical of the personal failings of such luminaries as Schmoller and Windelband, he does not hesitate to acknowledge their scholarly achievements. It is indicative of Weber's vaunted "objectivity" that in many letters he strives so hard to separate political, scholarly and personal evaluation. This has nothing to do with misunderstood notions of "value neutrality," but all the more with judgments appropriate to their own value sphere.

The most impressive demonstration of these qualities is found in the letters to Robert and Gisela Michels. Whereas Michels' own letters have been lost, the volume assembles sixty items, by far the largest batch to any recipient, apart from Marianne. The two men first met in April 1906 and the relation quickly grew as intimate as Weber was likely to get — a case of elective affinity. Similar in personal temper and scholarly interest in party organization as well as sexual ethics, they differed sharply about the nature and chances of socialism and democracy. Weber supported Michels privately and publicly during the difficult period when his Social Democratic affiliation ruined his academic prospects in Germany and helped him to get his *Habilitation* under Achille Loria in Turin in 1907, but the exasperated Michels was obviously at times a difficult correspondent. Unwavering in his friendly mentorship, Weber pushed Michels hard to clarify his views on the dynamics of socialist party organization and to

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overcome his sloppy writing habits. In the process he revealed much more about his basic views and personal experience than was characteristic of him. In spite of all substantive disagreements, Weber published Michels' essays in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* and finally arranged to make him co-editor (1911-15). The friendship ended only as a casualty of the Great War. The relation between the two men has been studied for decades, and Wolfgang Mommsen and Lawrence Scaff in particular have quoted from the originals in the Einaudi Archive, but this is no substitute for having the letters assembled and commented here *in toto*. Together they show Weber from his strongest side.

The volume, however, also painfully documents Weber's weakest side. The many postcards to Marianne, his most intimate and most repetitive communications, illustrate a classic case of professorial hysteria. Weber was an insomniac and became an addict to sleeping pills. His working binges were impossible without them and, despite good intentions to detoxify (and even cut down on the cigars), his compulsive vacation trips did not lick the problem. He felt he needed absolute rest and quiet. But there were always wind, loud talk, noisy children and, increasingly, automobile engines, not to mention gasoline smells. He fled to the end of the world, to the remotest beach houses on the Riviera and the Dutch coast, to no avail! "It is true children are something infamous. I am too much the rationalist to stand their irrational restlessness and yelling" (484). If this is written in a slightly humourous vein, other passages indicate that he was easily disturbed by the children of his sisters Clara and Lili and of Else Jaffé. His "daemon" (once called his *Schicksalsgott*, 458) keeps persecuting him. He "harasses me" (48), "rails" (501) and "rages" (505), "visits too frequently" (487), "does not permit it" (501), but perhaps will "spare me this time" (488) and "let me do something" (490, 498). Just as he anticipates and monitors Marianne's periods, he watches out for his "black days" (703), occasions for both to take to the couch. The monster must be appeased, mostly with the help of bromides and the new barbiturates, even an opiate cream (*Opiumsalbe*, 353). The "daemon" also does not like Weber to take walks and must then be shut up with codeine. Weber appears a typical victim of the age of neurasthenia. There is endless talk about nerves, sanatoriums and nerve doctors, who often make the mistake of stimulating rather than quieting. Since Weber sees only one real remedy, complete mental and physical inactivity, he, of course, never finds it.

The correspondence shows in stark detail how precarious Weber's state of health was even a decade after his original breakdown — a situation that also took a heavy toll on Marianne. There is no doubt that he felt crippled most of the time. At the end of many letters we read the refrain: "I feel lousy" (*schlecht*), sometimes "absolutely lousy" (*mordsschlecht*). Rarely do we read: "I am hard at work." But even in periods when he can work hard, speaking is strenuous and threatens, by making the insomnia worse, to paralyze him again (42). Weber frequently acknowledged his disabilities, especially in arranging meetings only tentatively or in turning down evening invitations. He signs off to Paul Siebeck (55): "Friendly greetings, yours faithfully, but in a hurry and plagued

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by migraines, M. W." Yet he rarely let others look deeper. An exception is the apology he wrote in January 1908 to his good friend Jellinek against whom he had reacted "abruptly" for being told that his maladies were basically not different from the burdens that other people had to carry. Weber felt compelled to reveal to the ailing Jellinek, who himself had only three more years to live, how hellish his life was: "You will admit that in conversation I do not tend to let people know how miserable I feel. For this very reason I appear to most as '*malade imaginaire*.' . . . I find it horrible enough that I must frequently explain to strangers in so many words why I can't do one thing or another. If you had the slightest inkling of what a leaden drag my existence has been for the last nine years and at best will continue to be, you would not even want to joke that I am not different from others. My existence is only possible if I am not reminded how I live. In the course of the years I have developed a firm technique to think and brood neither on my past, present or future but to live as the day requires and permits." Alluding to the famous apocryphal remark of Archimedes, he concluded: "Please don't disturb my circles. I do not need the least bit of encouragement since I am cheerful in every good hour, and my standards for having 'a good time' are more modest than even you or anybody else who suffers anxiety attacks or irregular heartbeat can possibly guess" (427f). It almost seems, then, that it gave Weber perverse satisfaction to believe that he suffered more than most other human beings.

At the same time that Weber reports almost daily on his ups and downs, he tends to infantilize and objectify Marianne, at least stylistically. His standard address of endearment is "My dear little snout" (because of her prominent pouting lips). As his father did in his bridal letters, there is still much reference in the third person, for example, "there would not be enough room here for little snout," or "we [i.e., he and his mother] look forward to see our dear snout," "we miss our little chick," 523), and, of course, she is still his "child" (526, 553). and "good girl" (535).

The letters to Marianne deal, however, not only with the trivia of everyday life in times of separation. In the spring of 1907 Marianne and Max met the Viennese psychiatrist Otto Gross, a much worse drug addict than Weber, in the Jaffé home and began to argue over the new ethic of sexual liberation. Weber's letters now reveal his reactions much more clearly than previously. In her biography of Max, Marianne described the disruptive impact that the new dispensation had in her circles and added a truncated version of Weber's famous repudiation of an article by Gross for the *Archiv*.[2] In 1964 Eduard Baumgarten printed most of the critique, a serious editorial evaluation, but still camouflaged it by identifying Edgar, not Else, as the recipient.[3] Now we

2. Marianne Weber, *Max Weber. A Biography*, trans. Harry Zohn, with a new introduction by Guenther Roth (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988), pp. 375-80.

3. Eduard Baumgarten, *Max Weber. Werk und Person* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1964), p. 644-48.

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have a reliable text (393-403) of the letter from September 13, 1907, which begins with "Liebe Frau Doktor" and the curious marginal note: "Last time you retaliated with 'Esteemed Herr Professor.' If you continue to treat me as a *Bonze* [bigshot], something that I would only forgive Herrn Dr. Gross and his ilk, I threaten to address you the next time as 'My Lady'." This, of course, reveals a strong personal undercurrent beneath the "objective" critique of Gross. Weber tried to stay on friendly terms with his baroness, although he was troubled by the knowledge that she was six months pregnant with the child conceived in her liaison with the "acosmistic" Gross, for whom promiscuity was a matter of principle. Half a year later, however, Weber felt he was through with Else and Edgar, the permissive *Trottel* (idiot, 441), after hearing from Marianne that her friend permitted a sexual encounter between her sister Frieda (Weekley, later Lawrence) and Gross in her own home. The outraged Max thought first of the laws against procuring, then of possible gossip by the servants, finally of the whole immorality of the matter. Disgusted with the "relativity" of the moral law (*Sittengesetz*) that evening he surrendered to "absolute irrationality" and won and lost one thousand francs at the casino in Monte Carlo (446f.) His "dear child" Marianne steadfastly refused his urgent suggestion to break with her bosom friend, and Max calmed down enough to have business meetings on translations for the *Archiv* with *la bella peccatrice* (621), although he felt irritated by the presence of her two-year-old daughter Marianne (von Eckardt, 1905-90). In 1908 Alfred Weber moved from Prague to Heidelberg (reducing the volume of fraternal correspondence) and began to make fun, in Else's company, of Marianne's "tea with morality" sessions — shades of things to come (554). Although the volume ends December 1908, the story continues, and this colors today's perception of Max' self-righteous but also anguished remarks. In 1910 Marianne realized that Max felt more attracted to Else than to her, but he lost Else to Alfred until 1917-18. Only then did Else and Max take the last step. Turning away from his "child," Weber ended up with his "lady" after all, and regained his old working capacity of three decades earlier in the brief time that he had left.

Although there are only seventeen extant letters to Alfred for the period, others help elucidate the complex relation between the two older brothers; the two youngers ones, Karl and Arthur, appear as supernumeraries. Max keeps worrying that his mother, then in her early sixties, is too much exhausted by taking care of her grandchildren — "these perennial (*ewige*) children, and now Lili again increases the world population" (522) — and arranges her annual vacation travel. He wants Alfred to have his "fair share" of time with his mother, writing to her that a "shared mother" should be a "doubled mother" (511). But he was aware that Helene found traveling abroad with Alfred difficult, given his "anti-moralistic preoccupations" and "aversion to everything German" (521). On April 18, 1908 he wrote to Marianne from Pisa: "Mama was depressed by Alfred's need to articulate his 'naturalism' and to take a stand for Austria against Germany, German women and German 'ethics'. . . .

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I told her that he simply did not want his Austrian friends to be considered 'inferior' on sexual grounds" (525f.). And on April 21: "When he is abroad, Alfred gets even more infuriated about the Germans than I do and then aggravates Mama with his enthusiasm for Austrian 'immorality,' since he seems to hold the curious view that 'Kant' has shaped the German character" (536f.).

Travel was expensive, although Max was very cost-conscious. Money matters play a considerable role in the correspondence. The relative financial well-being of Helene's children and their families depended very much on the money that enabled her to serve as family banker. Helene's grandfather, Carl Cornelius Souchay, merchant banker in Frankfurt, London and Manchester, had left behind a great fortune, some of which she inherited through her mother Emilie and her uncle Wilhelm August Souchay. There was enough left — I estimate between half a million and a million Marks — to finance, out of the interest, regular contributions to the cost of travel, medical treatment and scholarly books. While Alfred managed Helene's money, Max was the real *pater familias*, making the final decisions in concurrence with Helene, who relied on her eldest. In 1907 Marianne inherited 350,000 Marks from her maternal grandfather and Max' uncle, Carl David Weber, the linen manufacturer in Oerlinghausen, finally ending a dependence on his mother that had been particularly strong after his resignation from his professorship in 1903. In view of his total loss of formal academic rights, Weber's financial independence was the bedrock on which he could gradually build his extraordinary influence in German academic and intellectual life.

The correspondence allows a better understanding of the way in which the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* was run. When Heinrich Braun sold his journal to Edgar Jaffé in 1903 for 60,000 Marks, Werner Sombart, still mistaken for a Marxist *enfant terrible*, was internationally known, in contrast to Max Weber. But Sombart added little more than his name to the journal, leaving the "menial" labor to Jaffé and Weber and concentrating on his own big books, while letting the *Archiv* pay for his expensive book purchases. Weber draws perceptive vignettes of Sombart's controversial work and personality. At one point he explained to him the basic difference in their writing strategy: "You want to write 'personal' books. I am convinced that the personal quality (which you possess in such strong degree) comes through only if it is unintended, if it recedes behind the work and its *Sachlichkeit*, as all great masters step behind their work. Any effort to be 'personal' interferes with the literary value and almost always appears 'typical' . . . . Everybody will get the impression that you are only one of the usual esthetes and typical 'aristocrats' " (605). It was an intellectual judgment call that Weber won before posterity.

Under the new ownership and editorship, the *Archiv* disappointed many of its old readers, who were primarily interested in social and political reform and/or socialists of one sort or another (40). There were many complaints about its increasingly "methodological" orientation, and the influential economist Heinrich Herkner came to feel that Weber misused the journal for his personal interests.

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Indeed, Weber broke off his own "methodological" studies in part for this reason (69) and tried to expand the coverage of current developments (therefore his persistent efforts to enlarge Michels' role on the journal). Weber envisaged his Russian "chronicles" as the first in a series of supplements or in a special section of international correspondence. But the essays turned out to be a losing race against time when political events, his handwriting and emendations, and the typesetters' difficulties conspired against him. He was embittered that there was no public reaction at all to his Russian articles and drew little comfort from the initial interest in *The Protestant Ethic* — it was not yet clear that it would make him world famous. At the time he almost left the *Archiv* because he was frustrated with everybody from the typesetters to Siebeck and Jaffé. He seemed unable to recognize his own inability to contain the length of his manuscripts, and the same thing happened in 1907-08 when he complained bitterly that the "slavery" of his book-length encyclopedia entry on "Agrarian Conditions in Antiquity" had cost him three months of sleeping pills (430, 433). In 1908 Weber pushed through a new editorial arrangement, which made Jaffé the sole editor but in collaboration with the former co-editors. Sombart and Weber reduced their editorial compensation but continued to be paid for their publications.

This volume makes a significant contribution to German academic and intellectual history not only because of Weber's many observations on persons and issues but also because of the prominence, then or later, of so many of the recipients. The editors begin with a concise ten-page treatment of the biographical context from 1906 to 1908, followed by a general statement on the state of current knowledge and the conditions of the texts. The apparatus lists the provenance, date and conditions of each letter. Forty pages of biographical entries identify not only the recipients but almost all other persons mentioned by Weber. The footnotes also provide information on the letters and issues to which Weber responded and on the answers he received. Indeed, the notes contain many quotations from correspondents, but here selectivity and parsimony were unavoidable. Yet for this very reason the reader's curiosity is piqued time and again. Some may feel that it would be highly desirable to have several volumes of correspondence from the men and women of the intersecting academic, literary and political circles with which Max and Marianne were connected.

Guenther Roth

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The Euromissile Debate in Retrospect

Jeffrey Herf, *War by Other Means. Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).

It has been over a decade since NATO's controversial decision to deploy intermediate range nuclear missiles in Europe caused a heated debate in the European countries involved. Herf's new book focuses on the history of this dispute in West Germany. By analyzing post-war German intellectual history and political culture, he seeks to explain how the Euromissile decision became so controversial. His central thesis is that during the 1960s and 1970s the German Left blurred the crucial distinction between dictatorship and democracy, which resulted in public apathy about the Soviet threat. Accordingly, the competition between dictatorships and democracies and the "asymmetric" advantage of the former is the study's underlying theme. By exploiting the openness of Western democracies, the Soviet Union was able to exert considerable influence on German public opinion. As such, the opposition almost succeeded in blocking the missiles' deployment. Had it not been for the resolve of the German and other European governments to adhere to NATO's decisions, Herf argues, the Euromissile dispute might have ended with the US leaving Europe — a disastrous result that would have left the USSR as the dominant power. To support his argument, Herf examines the positions of particular German politicians and their impact on political decisions.

On the whole, the book is well-documented. Its core chapters on the Euromissile dispute, however, are flawed. What could have been an interesting and original contribution loses some value through oversimplification, excessive partisanship and a failure to deal with some events. The book ends up as a passionate homage to conservative politicians for their allegedly unprejudiced evaluation of the Soviet danger and their resolve to confront it. It is also a plea (rendered irrelevant by recent Soviet developments) to prevent the USSR from exploiting what Herf outlines as the weaknesses of Western democracies in their struggle with dictatorships.

Herf's book is predicated on the assumption that NATO's 1979 decision to deploy the INF missiles was primarily a reaction to the earlier Soviet SS-20 buildup. Here, in spite of the centrality of "military balance" to his argument, he is imprecise about what the concept means. Within the military establishment, it is generally agreed that what a "military balance" is — what should be counted under certain categories, etc. — is very unclear. This is all the more true for establishing what constitutes the "eurostrategic balance,"[1] i.e., the military balance

1. Thus, the inclusion or exclusion of the US forward-based aircraft assigned to

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between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Furthermore, by overemphasizing *individual* political positions, he avoids subtantive analyses of the issues and ends up occluding important features of the defense debate. Thus opposition to the deployment of the Euromissiles is depicted as hopelessly naive, uninformed and, most of all, blind to the Soviet danger.[2]

To the extent that Herf fails to outline the main parameters of the Euromissile decision, readers unfamiliar with defense policy will not be able to understand why this issue generated such extreme positions on both the Left and Right. Herf goes so far as to deny the very legitimacy of the opponents' criticism to the deployment of the missiles, although, by and large, they merely made public disputes which for years dominated internal NATO discussions concerning nuclear deterrence in general, and NATO's strategy of extended deterrence for Europe in particular. These disputes were generated by the basic geographic paradox whereby most of NATO's deterrents are deployed an ocean away from the probable target area. Herf never discusses issues of self-deterrence and the "credibility gap" either contextually or comprehensively.

Now, after almost a decade, there is a large body of literature on the Euromissile dispute. Had Herf made greater use of it he might have paid more attention to the evolution of the Euromissile decision within NATO. An analysis of NATO's discussions in the 1970s would show that the INF deployments were caused mainly by NATO's intention to modernize the means necessary for implementing NATO's strategy of flexible response. It is misleading to present the dispute, as Herf does, almost exclusively as limited to the issue of military balance and the SS-20s. Even in the strategic community it is acknowledged by now that the SS-20s' causal role in the decision was overemphasized in the public

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NATO in Europe within striking range of the Soviet Union makes a difference for the force ratios. Herf mentions but does not discuss this controversial issue, though it was central to the debate over whether the Soviet deployments of the SS-20's violated the European military balance. In a 1983 article Herf did, however, discuss the issue of the FBS. See Jeffrey Herf, "The Double Decision Still Makes Sense: A Response to my Critics," in *Telos* 56 (Summer 1983), pp. 156-71 (here pp. 167-68).

2. Herf's chapter on the West German peace movement was partly published in 1986 and triggered sharp criticisms. While he has since acknowledged some of his critics' points and qualified a number of his claims, in this new book he sticks to his basic argument that Left critics of deterrence theory denied the reality of the Soviet threat. Herf suggests that Dieter Senghaas' *Abschreckung und Frieden* argues that US deterrence theorists did not react to anti-communism and the Soviet threat, but invented it (p. 89). According to Herf, this means that Senghaas blames the US exclusively for the arms race. Matthew Evangelista, however, has pointed out that Senghaas has criticized the Soviet Union as being equally responsible for the arms race. See Gert Krell, Harold Müller, Matthew Evangelista and Jeffrey Herf, "Correspondence," in *International Security*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Fall 1986), pp. 204-05. See Jeffrey Herf, "War, Peace, and the Intellectuals. The West German Peace Movement," in *International Security*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Spring 1986), pp. 172-200. See also Walter Süß and Michael Lucas, "The 'Double Decision' Makes Sense — But for Whom? A Reply to Herf," in *Telos* 56 (Summer 1983), pp. 130-45. See also Jeffrey Herf, "Western Strategy and Public Discussion: The 'Double Decision' Makes Sense," in *Telos* 52 (Summer 1982), pp. 114-28.

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debate. In fact, the SS-20 threat served as a distraction to avoid a public discussion of the real contradictions in NATO's strategy of flexible response. By the same token, Herf overemphasizes the role Helmut Schmidt's famed 1977 speech played in the evolution of the decision. The speech is accurately labeled "the opening shot of the political battle over the euromissiles" (54), since Schmidt for the first time publicly drew attention to the eroding eurostrategic balance. However, Herf's interpretation of the speech as "the beginning of a historic reversal of the momentum of the global balance of forces" (54) reveals his ignorance of the discussions in NATO's Nuclear Planning Group. Since the early 1970s, this relevant NATO body intensively debated the necessity and the design of the modernization of the Theater Nuclear Forces. Schmidt's speech was *one* important push in this direction, but constitutes neither the beginning nor its justification. Herf also accepts at face value the US proposal to scrap all INF missiles by a "zero option"[3] when it is well known that the US was taken by surprise when the Soviets actually accepted it in 1987, or the implicit assumption that the Soviet Union gained escalation dominance by deploying the SS-20s. In fact, the INF missiles reconciled the differing German and US interpretations of flexible response by realizing both nations' aim of achieving the means for escalation control. This compromise was possible since the Americans and the Germans assigned divergent roles to the INF missiles: while the US contemplated the missiles for follow-up use, the Germans envisaged their mission in NATO's first use. In this context it has to be agreed that the analysis of the missile opponents, specifically that of the peace movement, contained several important misperceptions. Some argued that the missiles were first strike weapons and thus an inextricable part of a new US strategy to fight and win a nuclear war. Accordingly, the US forced the missiles on a reluctant West Germany. While these assumptions are partly flawed, Herf's conclusion in this context is unwarranted: "Assertions about nuclear war limited to Europe rested on imputation rather than on reference to government statements or documents, on a deep mistrust of the United States, a sense of West German victimization, and a belief that 'real' motives were hidden and sinister" (134). Here Herf overlooks what, in the early 1980s, precipitated considerable apprehension within the peace movement: Colin S. Gray's and Keith Payne's well-known 1980 article "Victory is Possible" (arguing for the possibility of a US nuclear victory), the Pentagon's plans to fight a protracted nuclear war (leaked by *The New York Times* in 1982), the Reagan administration's bellicosity, as well as growing international tension in the early 1980s.

Herf does not completely overlook these factors, but inexplicably dismisses them as meaningless. Thus he does not see any connection between the peace movement's apprehensions and some of the original reasons for deploying the

3. According to Thomas Risse-Kappen, the "zero option" was instrumentalized by missile proponents to block INF negotiations in Geneva. The proposal could be tolerated because it seemed unlikely that the Soviet Union would agree to it. See Thomas Risse-Kappen, *The Zero Option, INF, West Germany and Arms Control* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988), pp. 78-85.

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missiles, i.e., the US strategy to deploy them as a means for counterforce targeting. The continuous refinement of nuclear warfare deterrence resulted in several new military notions, such as "first strike," "counterforce," "limited war options," etc. However, it is debatable, even to experts, what exactly all these things mean. The peace movement's position can be criticized for having hypostatized US plans from a mere counterforce to a first strike strategy, but it cannot be dismissed outright as pure fantasy.[4] It is compatible with German and US strategic doctrines that the INF missiles were meant to serve as a means to end a war quickly by signaling NATO's willingness to escalate such a war to a strategic level. The peace movement's apprehension that the missiles would be used to fight a war limited in Europe were therefore justified.

Unlike his simplistic analyses of the Euromissile debate, Herf's study of West Germany's political culture in the 1970s provides some interesting insights into the German Left. Yet some of his assumptions are questionable. He depicts two contrary developments: on the one hand, he recognizes a "leftward shift of the whole political spectrum which included the capture of national executive power" (68) — a shift which led to the creation of the "popular front of the 1970s." On the other, in reaction to this shift, there was a turn to the Right on the part of the West German establishment. This countermobilization has been labelled the *Tendenzwende*.

Herf uses Uwe Nerlich's words to describe the SPD's transformation from a bulwark against communism "into a lever to be pulled by the Soviet Union in pursuing its strategy towards Western Europe" (12). His analysis of the views of the leaders of the Christian Democratic and Social Democratic parties of the 1950s, Konrad Adenauer and Kurt Schumacher, focuses on their vehement anticommunism. Accordingly, they upheld a clear distinction between dictatorship and democracy. However, when Egon Bahr and Willy Brandt entered the picture in the mid-1960s they initiated a process in which the SPD increasingly blurred the ideological boundaries between West Germany's "militant democracy" and the Soviet Union (27). Brandt and Bahr were the architects of *Ostpolitik* and the policy of detènte, which aimed at a normalization of relations with the East, and in particular with East Germany. Herf's elaboration of Brandt's concept of "an unbroken sense of the nation, in contrast to the West German state associated with Adenauer" (30) is insightful in view of Germany's recent unification and the dispute over who deserves most of the credit for it. But his main interest in analyzing *Ostpolitik* is to locate the responsibility of the SPD and, in particular, Bahr, for eroding the moral differences between dictatorships in the East and the freedom of Western democracies. This failure to criticize Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union prompted apprehensions, especially on the part of American leaders, that West Germany would slip out of its Western ties "to return to an older, once-discredited *Sonderweg*" (5). Herf correctly characterizes Brandt's

4. See Susanne Peters, *The Germans and the INF Missiles. Getting their Way in NATO's Strategy of Flexible Response* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1990).

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successor, Helmut Schmidt, as recycling Schumacher's anti-communism and a "hard line on the Soviet Union" (47).

Herf argues convincingly that in the 1970s, intellectuals leaned to the Left while the SPD lost support from all other social sectors. However, his explanation for this conservative shift among the West German elite is problematic. He identifies the Soviet military build-up as one cause of this shift (74) and thus ascribes the SPD's losses to its lax attitude towards "aggressive world communism." This simplistic explanation ignores several facts, including the establishment's realization that support for the social-liberal government's *Ostpolitik* could be withdrawn after access to trade with the East had been established. Similarly, the trade unions' immodest demands during the 1970s, which the SPD supported, were a growing thorn in the side of the West German elite.

Herf argues that by the 1970s "a good number of the sixties left had already secured positions in the educational system, government, and media from which they could influence West German political culture" (69). A more serious analysis of this question would have necessitated a discussion of the 1972 "Decree against Radicals," better known as *Berufsverbot*. It was intended primarily to prevent communists (but also extreme right-wingers) from entering civil service, and to dismiss those already there. At least 2,000 public servants went through disciplinary proceedings, and 256 were purged between 1972 and 1986. 35,000 suspect applications were submitted to hiring officials and roughly 2,250 of them were eventually rejected.[5] In a history of the political culture of the 1970s dealing with the power of the Left, disregarding the *Berufsverbot* is no small flaw. A consideration of the decree would also be relevant for Herf's accusation that the SPD's *Ostpolitik* resulted in an uncritical attitude towards communism. Seebacher-Brandt points out that the decree was initiated primarily by Willy Brandt because the SPD came to realize that its *Ostpolitik* jeopardized a sound balance between its domestic anti-communism and a political understanding with the USSR.[6]

Herf's study is a contribution to that realist tradition of international relations which regards the form of government as a critical variable. Thus he adapts Raymond Aron's assumption that to disregard a nation's regime leads to misunderstandings of 20th century interactions between dictatorships and democracies. He also has been influenced by Churchill's *Gathering Storm*, which made the case that WWII might have been prevented if Britain had not reacted so indecisively to Hitler's increasing power. According to Herf, Churchill's conclusion suggested "that the political virtues of democracies that make them 'open societies' — public debate, free elections, meaningful public opinion — can become strategic vices when confronted with regimes that are willing and

5. For this data, see Gerard Braunthal, *Political Loyalty and Public Service in West Germany. The 1972 Decree against Radicals and Its Consequences* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990), p. ix.

6. See Brigitte Seebacher-Brandt, *Die Linke und die Einheit* (Berlin: Corso bei Siedler, 1991), p. 51.

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able to exploit these virtues" (10). Thus the dispute concerning the euromissiles was "a war by other means," since it characterizes the Soviet Union's power politics by "means of diplomatic offensives directed at public opinion and counter-offensives aimed at taking a difficult case to democratic electorates" (13).

Herf's central thesis that the German Left blurred the distinction between democracy and dictatorship, thus resulting in public ignorance concerning the Soviet threat, is not convincing. On the one hand, the SPD's *Ostpolitik*, starting with Bahr's "*Wandel durch Annäherung*" (change through rapprochment) was designed to change communist regimes; on the other, with the *status quo* orientation of its *Ostpolitik*, the SPD created the impression that it was primarily interested in friendly relations with communist regimes rather than in encouraging human rights and reform movements in East Europe and the Soviet Union (in particular in the case of Solidarity in Poland). Herf's charge that the SPD appeased communist leaders by not making substantive criticisms is therefore correct. These ambiguities in *Ostpolitik* call for a reexamination of its impact. The SPD, however, did not blur the distinction between democracy and dictatorship, and stressed throughout the need to defend Western values and freedoms. West Germany's modification of its earlier anti-communism in the 1970s had a positive effect: it allowed a more sober view of the US and the realization that an aggressive foreign policy and escalation of the arms race is not only a feature of dictatorial but also democratic regimes. As a result, it is understandable that the West German public questioned the official justification for the missile deployment. This does not mean that most of the opposition underestimated the Soviet threat or, worse, did not consider Western democracy worth defending against communist dictatorships. They merely regarded the new missiles' deployment as unnecessary and inappropriate to deal with superpower conflicts.

Despite its weaknesses, Herf's book provides a number of new insights. His criticism that West Germany's opponents misinterpreted the Euromissile decision as "the product of American pressure" rather than "the result of West German concerns" (119) is warranted, though his case is unconvincing. More suggestive, though again overstated, is Herf's characterization of the peace movement as one with nationalist overtones. In retrospect, it is instructive to see how some of the arguments of the peace movement might have been perceived as highly nationalistic in other countries, e.g., by creating the image of both Germanies as victims of their respective superpowers. Were he not so carried away by his anti-communism, which leads him to strange innuendos regarding the possibility of the Soviet Union starting a nuclear war after the beginning of the missile deployments, and suggestions that Gorbachev's new thinking is mainly aimed at splitting the Alliance, Herf might have written a more valuable account of German political culture and intellectual history.

Susanne Peters

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Techno-Cosmopolitanism — French Style

Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989) x+447 pp.

Rabinow's sprawling and encyclopedic *French Modern* is inspired by Foucault's best work, his histories of madness, medicine, and, of course, *The Order of Things*. Like his mentor, Rabinow believes that "the era of man began when representations ceased to provide a reliable grid for the knowledge of things," and when man as a "social being" was conceived as a project for study and improvement. Like Foucault, Rabinow combines the informed serendipity and resourcefulness of a passionate researcher with a strong philosophical orientation. But Rabinow also retains a few of Foucault's more frustrating quirks. He qualifies to the point where he jeopardizes his claims and is enigmatic rather than assertive about the implications of his case. Fortunately, he is not quite as obsessed with power and control as was Foucault.

French Modern is an ambitious attempt to understand how a certain kind of knowledge modeled on 19th century biology framed and simultaneously imposed its vision on social thinkers and reformers. Rabinow sets out to reconstruct the history of what he calls "techno-cosmopolitanism," the utopian and technocratic dimension of social modernity as the unique provenance of an enlightened elite possessing sublime aesthetic judgment. By concentrating on the "middling modernism" of *beaux arts* architects, urban planners, municipal socialists, government administrators and social scientists, he underscores the link between French efforts to modernize the social order and the moral and architectural principles enlisted in that enterprise. France, he claims, was unique insofar as there was an "unshaken faith in positive science" no matter how often reformers might be daunted in practical applications of their ideas. The resulting "pathos" of French modernity was a Lamarckian imperative: if not adapt or die, then reform or decline.

For Rabinow the watershed event was the cholera epidemic which ravaged Paris in the Spring of 1832. The outbreak of epidemic disease confirmed the still novel idea that the city was comprised of interdependent parts, an organic "milieux" that "caused living beings to change or adapt." For the Enlightenment thinkers there were only individuals inserted in either nature or society; after 1830 the discoveries of the biologists Xavier Bichat and Jean Baptiste de Lamarck redefined man as an organism which prospered only under delicately maintained and optimally structured conditions of existence.

In the wake of this discovery, "society" gradually came into focus as an object of study with its own laws, subject to detailed empirical investigations

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(and malleable to divergent solutions to the "social question"). In the early part of the century the emphasis was on philanthropy and moralizing, but by the late 1840s reformers across a broad spectrum (from moderate socialists to Social Catholics) "attempted to map antagonistic classes onto a common space regulated by scientifically derived social norms." Long before Durkheim, Adolphe Quetelet developed his "social physics" and Louis-René Villermé investigated the impact of social conditions on the health, mortality, and morality of the urban poor. Catholic conservatives like Fréderic Le Play carefully documented the moral ties and private lives of individuals in order to create families "who were thrifty, *prévoyante*, and disciplined." During his long career as a military expert and colonial administrator Le Play's enthusiastic disciple, Hubert Lyautey (the villain of Rabinow's story) went on to envision and attempt to create a new urban order unencumbered by the defects of poverty and the threat of political disorder.

Despite their political diversity, these pioneers of the social all concluded that it was impossible to change the individual "without reforming the social milieu within which his actions were formed." Useful citizens displaying the proper "norms" could be generated only if cities were transformed to embody the appropriate "forms" — creating the link between social modernity, aesthetic, and architectural principles. Urban planning and social policy were thus connected by a dual ethos: at once moralizing and spatializing, these architects and urban planners were also sensitive to local customs and styles, a crucial dimension of their view of the city as a dynamic and fragile entity. At the turn of the century these efforts were best exemplified by Toni Garnier's 1894 Cité Industrielle, a social laboratory (for 35,000 inhabitants) in which "form was guided by the latest scientific norms" and "norms were given forms appropriate to their functions."

By the close of the century, French social reformers embraced the principle that class harmony, social justice, technical progress and moral rehabilitation were all feasible and desirable; and, conversely that the atavisms of class war, exploitation, and degeneration could be eliminated. Their watchwords were "solidarity," "interdependence," "responsibility" and "*prévoyance*" (providence). The result was the first glimmer of the welfare state: a cult of social expertise, and the investment of hope in the rule of technocrats who might perfect life, labor and leisure by the optimal organization of the social environment.

Rabinow's point is that the welfare state was not simply a response to the inevitable class war, as Marxists usually argue, nor was it the logical extension of natural rights, as liberals maintain. Rather, it was rooted in new forms of knowledge and a new politics which elaborated new techniques of social pacification. Social harmony required both a grand theoretical vision and attention to empirical detail, resulting in a permanent division between abstract functionalist and more concrete historicist approaches in the social sciences. By century's end these diverse elements (discourses and practices) "coalesced to create a consensus on the primacy of the social and the welfare of the population as its guiding norm." These norms were instrumental in creating institutions like the *Office du*

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Travail, a state agency mandated to collect information on work in France and the colonies (staffed by the Le Playists), as well as the private Musée Social, where enlightened industrialists and social experts sought to achieve social harmony through scientific knowledge. The key arguments were frequently articulated by the Solidarists, a group of liberal intellectuals and reformers who utilized science to demonstrate the mutual dependence of all individuals on society, and to promote the idea that it was a social imperative to protect against the vicissitudes of chance and social dislocation. Suspicious of politics, anxious about social conflict, and fearful of democratic mass participation, the reformer's antidote to class conflict and moral depravity was a scientifically administered aesthetic urban order. Like a vast insurance company, society had to socialize, not property as the Marxian socialists demanded, but risk.

Combining the statist-scientific utopianism of Saint-Simon with the example of Louis XIV, who pacified the French nobility through the "pleasures and amusements" of Versailles, these artists of the social were convinced that the *citoyen* could be seduced and ennobled by the amenities and beauties of a well-planned city. The combination of the normalizing and the scientific, the general and the empirical, the universal and the particular was a dramatic departure from the strict Cartesian certainties of an earlier and more naive era. The concept of milieu marked out a "space between God and Nature" where life must be flexible, adaptive and self-regulating in order to survive. As Georges Canguilhem pointed out, in the later 18th century the term "milieu" migrated from Newtonian mechanics to zoology, then to anthropology, and, in the next century, ultimately to social policy. In contrast to Darwinism, which was long resisted in France, the Lamarckian ethos demanded that society mitigate the destructive effects of private property. "If association through intelligence was the means, progress and *bien-être* (well-being) for the individual and the species, were the goals" (138). The classical Foucaultian premise is thereby historically secured: progress and discipline were inextricable.

It is no accident that the most fertile ground for these ideas was the colonies, not the metropolis. The first comprehensive experiment in urban planning took place in Morocco under the Protectorate of Hubert Lyautey, who became resident-general in 1912. A believer in "natural aristocracy," Lyautey ruled as an autocrat. His administration was based on the separation of "social technology" from the vices of those who put it into practice. Unencumbered by law or local custom, he issued decrees unimaginable in France, expropriated property, and built his *villes nouvelles* adjacent to Morocco's older cities. An admirer of Muslim culture, Lyautey allowed the indigenous community to maintain its cultural autonomy — without rights — while he segregated the European and Arab populations. The result was dual cities, with the new sections of Casablanca, Fez and Rabat constructed to conserve local forms "to orchestrate this diversity, to conceive of and produce a new, modern social *ordonnance*. Whereas in France modernizing on a grand scale was discouraged and obstructed, in Morocco Lyautey combined his ruthless urbanism with

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orientalist romanticism, so that the "theatricality of tradition, it was hoped, would present a constant social and moral stage to the French."

Rabinow's attitude toward this "middling modernism" is strangely ambivalent. By the end of the first WWI the *plan de vie* passed from a hygienic to a sociological phase, dominated by the ideal of "*la famille normale moyenne*" administered and controlled by social work experts who judged fitness for state financed housing. Rabinow decries their socially imperious attitude while praising the other strand of modernizing culture — the emphasis on localism, history, the environment and (in Morocco) ethnic diversity. When the Durkheimian tradition collapsed after WWII the 19th century reform ideal of social solidarity was jettisoned for an insidious high-modernism. According to Rabinow, the "decontextualization" inherent in techno-cosmopolitanism triumphed: "a debased international style became the official style of France's vast postwar building program." This seems to say, though Rabinow is never direct about it, that a "contextualizing" modernism, e.g., one which recognizes local, historical and environmental features — as some of the aesthetic theorists believed — could have prevailed, and that it would have been preferable to high-rise, mall-infested French suburbs. Postmodernism was not the solution, nor was it on the agenda.

Nevertheless, there is a lesson in Rabinow's emphasis on the connection between regulating and supervising behavior — the normalizing ethos — and the aesthetic ideals that governed the convictions of 19th century utopian planners and urban technocrats. One feature of modernist civic-minded social liberalism is that it permits those who dispense the social goods to determine acceptable or normal behavior, to define the proper norms appropriate for the forms. The welfare state is not merely a solution to class conflict, it requires an inordinately high level of social solidarity and demands far greater homogeneity from those whom it benefits. In short, people prefer to help people like themselves. This may be anathema to American liberals who cannot imagine promiscuous government interference in the private sphere, but it may indeed be a prerequisite for the success of large-scale social planning.

Rabinow has uncovered an important and often ignored anti-political strain in European thought. The origins of *French Modern* are as diverse as the labyrinthine byways of this book. Nevertheless, despite its fascinating detail and arcane research, Rabinow's most evocative thesis remains largely unsubstantiated: that a dissolute, disorganized and politically volatile pattern of life was extinguished by a "normalizing welfarism, e.g., by erecting a well-ordered and healthy society that gradually marginalized political conflict, diversity and social pathology." The prominence of Lyautey and the colonial context undermines rather than illustrates this central point. Rabinow is right to say that WWI was "a laboratory situation in which experiments with modern elements were seriously undertaken." But it took another World War and the Monnet plan to bring those experiments into the mainstream of French politics. Until then "French modern" remained a contradiction in terms.

This book recaptures the utopian spirit that guided modernizers in architecture,

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urban planning, sociology and politics during the 19th and early 20th centuries. *French Modern* is best at showing the deep investment of liberals, conservatives and socialists alike in notions such as social solidarity and milieu. The magnetism of these concepts, as well as their exaggerated reliance on contemporary scientific assumptions, may be worth recalling at a time when the possibility of any comprehensive social solution seems to have fallen on hard times. The crisis of all "socialisms," not just the communist variety which has come to an abrupt end, is in no small part a consequence of the collapse of the social vision that this book documents.

Anson Rabinbach

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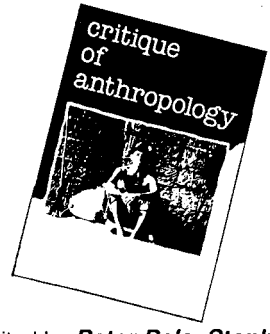

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